T. C. Beckinsale

1846

THE Grounds and Foundation OF Natural Religion, DISCOVER'D, IN THE Principal BRANCHES of it, in Oppoſition to the Prevailing NOTIONS of the Modern *Scepticks* and *Latitudinarians*.

WITH

An INTRODUCTION concerning the Neceſſity of REVEALED RELIGION.

By *Tho. Beconſall*, B. D. and Fellow of *Braſenoſe* Colledge, in *Oxford*.

LONDON: Printed by *W. O.* for *George Wells*, Bookſeller, in *Oxford*. MDCXCVIII.

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TO THE READER.

IT was not without ſome Reluctancy that I determin'd with myſelf to commit my Thoughts upon the following Subject, to the Public. I'm ſenſible a new Author is like a ſtrange Bird, ſtray'd from his Company; and conſequently not only liable to be peck'd at by the whole Flight of Criticks, but expoſed to their moſt exquiſite Cruelties, rather than Wit or Judgment. Indeed the firſt Adventures of this kind will receive Advan-

tages from few, even among the Learned Order; ſince the ſofteſt, the graveſt Cenſures are, *That the World is already too full of Books, that rather ſerve to diſtract our Thoughts, than inform our Judgments, or improve our Knowledge: That the Preſs is the Parent of more Impertinences, or crude and empty Notions than uſeful Truths; and conſequently, ſerve to detain an unadviſed Reader upon the Surface, whilſt a few, well-choſen Authors, would let him into the Marrow and Quinteſſence of Learning.* Theſe are indeed unqueſtionable Truths; and perhaps this Adventure may ſerve to confirm 'em. But this is not all; for it's obſervable ſome Men of Figure and Station, on every turn, diſcover their Averſions by their

their Wiſhes: *They could heartily wiſh that the preſent Diſputes or Controverſies might fall, having no Proſpect of any good Effects or Advantages by 'em.* I muſt confeſs theſe are Admonitions that ſhould be attended to with Caution, to prevent any Man from being over-haſty in Commencing Author. But yet if we conſider the Induſtry, Inſolence, and Boldneſs of our Adverſaries, the open Attacks of ſome Authors, and the *Artificial Inſinuations* of Others; And in a word, the united Zeal of theſe Perſons to Unhinge and Demoliſh, without Propoſing the leaſt Model to ſucceed their Ruins; I can ſee no reaſon why thoſe that are Advocates for Truth, and Guardians of an Eſtabliſhed Church, ſhould ſuffer Controverſie to fall,

by allowing them to empty their Gall and Filth without Oppoſition or Controul. It's very certain, that the Notions, now ſo current and induſtriouſly propagated, are the whole Stock or Cargo of Infidelity and Irreligion, of Error, Prejudice, or Diſguſt, that have been hatched and nurſed in private for a whole Age together, and are now vented by the Liberty of the Preſs; and therefore thoſe that diſcountenance the Aſſailment of ſuch pernicious Adverſaries ſeem to eſtabliſh a new and unheard of Indulgence, which no one, but Criminals, muſt have the leaſt Benefit of. It's well known, the Conceits of Error, and Boldneſs of Irreligion are ſuch, That the moſt crude and frothy Performance, not replied

plied to, must pass for *Unanswerable*. And this gives Credit and Authority to the Industry of an Adversary in propagating his Notions; and by this means, the weakest and most uncouth Suggestions are by tract of Time rivetted in an injudicious Reader, when an early Reply had caused 'em to be rejected with Scorn and Contempt. From these Considerations, the Labours and Endeavours of the Members of our Church, may be sufficiently vindicated; and, I hope, in some measure lay a Foundation for an Apology to my present Undertaking.

I have here endeavoured to represent the *Foundation* and *Measures* of *Natural Religion*; being an Expedient not only to induce a Sense of Religion, but

to prepare the Mind for an Aſſent to Revealed Religion, the Complement and Perfection of it. I'm ſenſible there are ſeveral eminent Hands have been engaged on the Subject; but having few of the prevailing Principles of this Age to contend with, they have not fallen in with my main Deſign, which *was to calculate a Scheme of Natural Religion in Oppoſition to 'em.*

I thought myſelf obliged to Animadvert on ſome Authors, not only where they ſeem to overturn the fundamantal Principles of Morality, but where they have advanced Arguments or Inſinuations that carry a manifeſt Tendency that way. This Deſign, I preſume, will eaſily obtain a favourable Conſtruction;

ction; ſince 'tis well known, That an artificial Inſinuation, or a pernicious Argument advanced by a Side-wind, carries a more fatal Influence than bold and peremptory Poſitions and Aſſertions. I muſt confeſs, the *Author of the Eſſay of Humane Underſtanding*, diſcovers ſuch a *reſerved* Way of Writing in all his Performances, that, I'm perſwaded, he *Deſigns* more than he as yet thinks it ſeaſonable to *Expreſs:* And therefore I have uſed him with more Freedom, to oblige him to place ſome Aſſertions in a better Light, and expreſs his *Meaning* more fully, if not his *Intentions*. I have differed in my Opinion from two excellent Diſcourſes; * but, I hope, my Reader will find nothing but a Difference in Opinion, determined

* *Conference with a Theiſt.* Part 2. *The Certainty and Neceſſity of Religion in General.*

mined by a Thread of Argument. Beſides, 'tis in Matters that do not affect the main Deſign of either of the Diſcourſes, that ſtand firm and unſhaken, eſtabliſhed upon the cleareſt Arguments and Concluſions. Thus much I thought myſelf obliged to Remark; becauſe I never intended to Detract from the Character theſe Authors have juſtly merited, or leſſen the Reputation or Eſteem of ſuch uſeful Performances.

And now give me leave to conclude with a few Periods, with reference to myſelf and the following Diſcourſe: I have here delivered my Thoughts form'd in the midſt of a great many Avocations. I have acted with all imaginable *Sincerity* in the purſuit of Truth, and reſigned up

up my Judgment to nothing but that Light, or thoſe Notices which were gained by the *fair-eſt* and moſt *direct Methods* of Information. I'm as yet perſwaded I have repreſented every thing according to the preciſe Lines of Truth; but if I have any where miſcarried, I can ſafely declare 'tis without *Deſign*, as much as without *Prejudice* againſt any I have oppoſed. My great Aim was not only to recover diſcarded Notions, but a Senſe of Religion; by eſtabliſhing it upon its true Foundations; not only to ſilence Infidelity, but to remove that Scepticiſm, thoſe Doubts and Heſitations that prevail concerning the moſt important Points of Natural Religion. But theſe are Effects too great to be accompliſhed

compliſhed without the Concurrence of Heavenly Influences. We may Wiſh and Pray for 'em, but we muſt commit the Succeſs of 'em to the FATHER of Grace and Mercy. There muſt be ſome more than ordinary Effuſions of Grace to engage Men in the Uſe and Exerciſe of thoſe Means, which God has eſtabliſhed for the Diſcovery of the Divine Will; ſomething to take off the Contempt of thoſe Ordinances which God has appointed for the Attainment of this End; ſomething that will Correct thoſe unjuſt, but prevailing Prejudices, againſt an *Order of Men, eſtabliſhed by God in his Church*; whereby they are rendred as deſpicable for want of Honeſty as Senſe. This is the Work

of

of Heaven. God is able as well as faithful to accompliſh it in his own good time.

If the following Papers fall into the Hands of Men of theſe Sentiments, I can aſſure them they'll find nothing of the Imaginary Arts or Myſtery of *Prieſtcraft*, nothing of any *deſigning Leader*, nothing peculiar to the *wary Guardians of Creeds and Profitable Inventions*, ſo often hinted by the late *Author of the Reaſonableneſs of Chriſtianity*. But if any thing offers itſelf, that cannot well be digeſted, I ſhall freely embrace a *fair* and *pertinent* Anſwer, and endeavour to make ſuch Returns as, I hope, may, at laſt, beget full Conviction on both ſides.

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INTRODUCTION

THE INTRODUCTION,

Concerning the

Neceſſity of REVELATION.

IT may perhaps ſeem a very improper Entertainment to the Chriſtian World, to eſtabliſh a Line of Duty from the Records of the Book of Nature, when we enjoy a more *ſure Word of Prophecy*, or *Form of ſound Doctrine, which is able to make us wiſe unto Salvation*, or to delineate the Features of Moral Good and Evil, when *Life and Immortality are brought to light through the Goſpel*; or, in a word, to dwell on the *Infant-principles of Religion*, when we may *go on unto Perfection*. But certainly the Spirit and Temper peculiar to the Age we live in, is abundantly ſufficient to ſuggeſt an Apology; Are we not profeſſedly Attack'd as to the Truth and Authority of Revelation, and the Whole of Religion reſolved into a Set of Moral

Rules and Maxims? And tho' others as yet cannot Diſcard all Revealed Truths, yet they act as if they were Advocates for the Cauſe; whilſt they allow no other Riſe, or Original to Moral Rules and Maxims, than *Cuſtom*, *Education* and a few unaccountable *Traditions*. Theſe (are Mens Proceedings which) ſeem to be embarked in the ſame Deſign, *viz.* The Subverſion of all Religion. Our holy Religion is by this means ſtript of its moſt convincing Arguments for its Truth and Divinity, its Intrinſic Goodneſs and Purity; by an Appeal to the Precepts of Natural Religion. The Believer muſt grant, That if *Cuſtom*, *Education* and an unaccountable *Tradition* give Birth to all the prevailing Principles of Morality, the Argument of the Intrinſic Purity of any Religious Precepts will fall to the ground: and when the *Deiſt* has beat him from this Fortreſs, he'll eaſily perſwade him that all the reſt is *Cheat* and *Impoſture*. The Believer having then thus far reſigned his Notions of Morality, will now come into Play, and do an equal Piece of Service to the *Deiſt* and himſelf too, by making both Converts to *Atheiſm* and *Irreligion*: For when the Morality and Religion

on of Mankind is wholly to be resolved into *Customs*, *Education*, and the *Mode* and *Habits* of Ancestors, and Contradictions in Principles of Morality produced as a Confirmation of the Notion, what can more effectually subvert the eternal Distinctions of Good and Evil, and as a Consequent of it introduce and establish a *Law of Fashion*, as the only Measure, and Standard of Vertue? I will not positively fix these Designs on all those that have espoused the Notion: It's sufficient to my present Business that it carries a manifest Tendency towards the Promotion of 'em, or that it gives a Foundation to the *Impious* and *Prophane* to establish their lewd Schems of Infidelity.

It cannot therefore be unseasonable, to assert the *Divine Authority*, and *Original* of Natural Religion; and that too not only by way of Vindication of such an important Truth, but as it serves the Cause of Christianity against the Attempts of *Deists* and *Unbelievers*. These are Conclusions so natural and obvious, that I'm perswaded the natural Tendency of the Doctrin, with an *undisturbed Toleration*, will too fatally demonstrate the Power and Efficacy of 'em.

But yet, whilſt we endeavour to obviate one growing Error, it ought to be conſider'd, whether ſuch Endeavours do not prepare the way for introducing, and confirming another more dang'rouſly pernicious: For if God has eſtabliſh'd a Law of Nature, antecedent to Revelation, as an indiſpenſable Rule of Duty, and Action to Mankind, and enabled 'em to diſcover and embrace it as ſuch; the *Deiſt* will conclude there can be no Neceſſity for a *Revealed Religion*; and conſequently reſolve it into a *Contrivance* of ſome *Deſigning Men*, an *Artificial Syſtem* of certain *Creed-makers*, (as a late *Author* has Characteriz'd a certain Order of Men) to ſecure an Empire, as well as Maintainance from the ſilly Populace. I muſt confeſs this is the great *Goliah*, the Champion-argument which Infidelity has recourſe to, to aſſail the Faith of the Living God, *once delivered to the Saints*. But certainly this is a lewd Attempt, for Men to think to Demonſtrate againſt a plain Matter of Fact, by putting their Adverſaries upon demonſtrating the Neceſſity of ſuch a Matter of Fact. This is to advance our own ſhallow Underſtandings above the Sphere of Infinite Wiſdom, and Reaſon, ſince we are reſolved not only

to

to pronounce the most solemn Transactions of Providence useless, but reject the Truth and Certainty of 'em, because a biass'd Judgment is resolved not to account for the Ends and Designs of 'em. But certainly, the Reasons and Necessity of things are sufficiently asserted, by resolving 'em into the Decrees and Proceedings of infinite Wisdom. If Revealed Religion is not *from God*, the Unbeliever has an easier Task to detect the Forgery. If the Believer contends for a Divine Original, why should it not be tryed upon its proper Evidence? I mean as all matters of Fact are. But I am perswaded the Apprehensions of a certain Defeat, oblige the Infidel to decline this Challenge: For it's well known, the most avow'd Enemies to Revelation, even *Julian* himself, could never dispute the Evidences of Christian Truth; I mean the Performance of Miracles. However, since the modern Unbeliever seems to plume himself in the Successes of this Argument, I shall for once allow the Objection, and venture the whole Merits of the Cause in demonstrating the *Expediency* and *Necessity* of *Divine Revelation*.

§. 18. Now, in order to this, it will be requiſite to make a ſhort Survey of the *Original State* and *Condition* of Mankind, both before and after the *Fall*; for by this means we may make a more exact Eſtimate of the Capacities, and Attainments of Mankind in matters of Knowledge, as well as Practice.

It will readily be granted, That as God originally eſtabliſhed a Line of Duty in the very Frame of our Natures, ſo He undoubtedly created us with Faculties, to enable us to diſcern, or comprehend every Part, or Branch of it. It's true, Laws of Nature were never preſented to the View of the Mind, by an Angelic ſort of Intuition, without Ideas paſſing thro' the Animal part: But yet Reaſon will oblige us to conclude, That the *Glory* of an *Almighty Creator*, and the *Expreſs Image of his Perſon*, came forth of his Hands pure and ſpotleſs: All his Powers, Faculties and Appetites, were correct and regular: Thoſe native Paſſions and Propenſions, which are now too often the Parents of Diſorder and Confuſion, were, no doubt, originally conſtant Attendants, and faithful Handmaids to the Powers of Reaſon: That Love and Zeal, that Complacency-

placency and Delight, which are now fatally chain'd to ſenſual Enjoyments, were originally engaged and devoted to the Entertainments, and Exerciſes of a ſpiritual, rational Mind. Our chiefeſt Flights of Zeal and Love, were, no doubt, directed on the Improvement of Knowledge, and the Diſquiſition of Truth. And certainly here's a ſolid Foundation for Truth: For here are not only native Paſſions and Propenſions, which ſerve as Springs to engage the Mind in the cloſeſt Reſearches after Truth; but the whole Frame of the animal Part, being thus correct, the Images of Things muſt needs be preſented to the View of the Mind in their native Shapes, and Proportions, without the leaſt Paint or Diſguiſe; and conſequently the Mind could act and diſplay herſelf in the largeſt Train of Deductions, without the leaſt Trippings, or Miſcarriages. So that Man, in his Original Frame, was enabled to lay in a wonderful Stock of ſubſtantial Knowledge, and make a clear Diſcovery of the full Line of Duty.

But beſides, it's highly conſonant to Reaſon to imagin, as the Great Creator of the World had adorned his *Image* and *Repreſentative* with all deſirable Perfections,

ctions, ſo he had not only entitled, but inveſted him with ſpecial Favours and Bleſſings, as well Spiritual, as Temporal: For we muſt not ſuppoſe, that the placing him in *Paradiſe*, only implies an actual Fruition of the whole Circle of Temporal Felicities; but the Diſpenſation of ſuch Spiritual Bleſſings, and Favours, as are ſuitable to Human Nature, whilſt it reſted on this ſide Heaven, and was not immediately inſtated in the *Beatific Viſion*. Whilſt Man retained his primitive Innocence, he was no doubt a very choice Favourite in the Eyes of his Maker, and conſequently we muſt conclude that he enjoyed conſtant Communications, and Intercourſes with him. For *Paradiſe* may juſtly be preſumed to be a kind of Terreſtrial State of Viſion; and therefore God no doubt diſcovered himſelf in frequent Adumbrations of his Divine Preſence, and vouchſafed ſeveral ſpecial Revelations, and his Divine Succours.

Theſe may perhaps be thought unneceſſary Diſpenſations in a State of unſpotted Innocence and Integrity. But, certainly, tho' Man in his original Frame was endued with a Sufficiency of Power to Decypher the Line of Duty, as well

as

as Propensions, and Dispositions to observe, and walk up to it; yet such gracious Communications were in some measure necessary, to maintain a deep Sense of the Majesty, and Authority of our Maker, and consequently a deep Sense of Duty, and Obedience; to maintain a deep Sense of the Goodness and Purity of God, and consequently possess the Mind with an incessant Desire to act in Conformity to his most sacred Will.

Again, necessary they were to arm those native Powers, and Propensions with double Force and Activity; to unite and fix 'em on their proper Object, the Glory and Perfections of their Maker, the Pursuit of *Truth* and *Divine* Knowledge; and consequently to engage a Perseverance in the Line of Duty, with the utmost Constancy and Resolution.

These were, nodoubt, the surprizing Felicities of *Paradise*. And they are such, as almost placed him out of the possibility of a Miscarriage, had he not, in some unguarded Minute, fell in with a subtle indefatigable Impostor. For without some such Misfortune he could not have failed in retaining a perpetual

Sense

Sense of Duty and Obedience, and persevering in it, any more than in a discovery of the full Line of Duty.

§. 2. But now Experience, as well as Reason, too fatally assure us, there's a powerful, and almost irresistible Bias on the *Animal Part*, that bears an older Date than *Custom* or *Education* can pretend to give; a Bias that discovers itself in the first Efforts of Infancy; a Bias that can never be perfectly regulated, or corrected even by the most exquisite Arts of Education: When the Powers of Nature seem to exist as it were *in fieri*, folded up in Impotency and Imperfection, and consequently (one would think) liable to be molded at Pleasure; yet we find this Bias endu'd, as it were, with a Gygantick Strength, able to resist the most powerful Antidotes, obstinate under Commands, and untractable under Counsels or Persuasives. In a word, it has introduced an internal Rupture in the whole Frame of Man, renders him a kind of unnatural Production, acted by two opposite Principles, contending for two different Ends and Interests, and agreeable to the sacred Language, it has raised an intestine and eternal War,

for

for its a *Law in our Members warring against the Law of our Mind*, Rom. 7. 23. So that Man is certainly ſunk in his original Frame, and lapſed into a State of Corruption and Degeneracy: This is Truth ſo clear, and unqueſtionable, that the moſt diſcerning Heathens have given Teſtimony to the Subſtance of it: They all found it wove in with their Natures, and diſcovering itſelf, not only in inward Motions, and Propenſions, but mixing itſelf in their moſt exalted Actions. It's true, they were perplexed in accounting for its Original, yet they all ſaw it in its Effects and Conſequences. Their Opinions were various; however, I ſhall mention the chief of 'em: *Plutarch* charges the *Stoicks* with aſcribing Evil as well as Good to God's Providence, and arraigns it as the height of Abſurdities. [See his Tract *Adverſus Stoicos*,] * Πρῶτον μὲν οὖν τὴν κακίαν γενινύναι κατὰ τὴν τοῦ Θεοῦ πρόνοιαν, πᾶσι ἐπίνοιαν ἀτοπίας ἐμβάλλει; τί γὰρ μᾶλλον ἀγαθῶν ἢ κακῶν δοτῆρες ἔσονται; πῶς οὐ εἴ τι θεοῖς ἐχθρὸν ἡ κακία καὶ θεόμισες. *If this were true, why ſhould they be more concerned to diſpenſe Good rather than Evil; or how is it poſſible that Evil ſhould be hateful to 'em?* This indeed was an Opinion extremely groſs, and conſequently rejected by the moſt dis-

* P. 1065. Ed. Par. 1624.

discerning Sages. However *Gellius*, pursuant to this, delivers it as the Opinion of *Chrysippus*: [This is the very Opinion which *Plutarch* ingeniously exposes, *Ib.*] That Vice sprang from Vertue, Κατὰ παρακολούθησιν. *Dum virtus hominibus per consilium naturæ gignitur, vitia ibidem per affinitatem contraria nata sunt.* But the most general Opinion was, That Good and Evil proceeded from two distinct Principles. Hence *Plutarch* gives it as a most ancient Tradition, recited by Divines, and Law-givers, and transmitted to Poets and Philosophers; Τῶν ἀρχὴν ἀδεσπότον ἔχουσα, *whose Authority is not to be traced*: That there was not one only Supream Governing Principle, οὔτε εἷς ἐστιν ὁ κρατῶν καὶ κατευθύνων; And from the Eternal Mixture of Good and Evil, as well as the Imperfection and Allay of Good, concludes, We are acted by two contrary Principles, the one conducting, or tolling us on, in a true and direct Path, and the other haling us back again, Τῆς μὲν ἐπὶ τὰ δέξια καὶ κατ' ἐνθεῖαν ὑφηγουμένης τῆς δ' ἔμπαλιν ἀγναστρέφουσης καὶ ἀνακλώσης. Nay, he further argues, If nothing can exist without a Cause, and Good cannot be the Cause of Evil, there must be a peculiar Principle of Evil, as well as Good, Διὸ γένεσιν ἰδίαν καὶ ἀρχὴν ὥσπερ ἀγαθοῦ

καλοῦ

καλῶ τὴν φύσιν ἔχειν. *De Iside & Osyride.* Page 369.

But further, not to dwell too long upon Authorities, it's well known, it was an ancient Doctrine among the Heathens, to ascribe the Origine of Evil, to certain malevolent Spirits, called *Dæmons*, or *Manes*; that could exercise a Power over the Minds, as well as Bodies of Men, and dispose and incline them to evil Actions. *Plutarch*, in this very Treatise, gives a full Account of the Notion, and the Nature of 'em; nay, he delivers it as the Doctrine of *Plato*, *Pythagoras*, *Zenocrates*, and *Chrysippus*, following that of the *Ancient Divines*, Ἑπόμεναι τοὺς πολλοὺς θεολόγους. Ib. *p.* 360. The Opinion of *Zenocrates* is very remarkable, who attributes Obsceneness, Irreligion and other Evils to certain powerful malevolent Spirits, inhabiting the Region of the Air, that take Delight in such Things, Εἶναι φύσεις ἐν τῷ ἀέρι ἔχοντι μεγάλεις μὲν καὶ ἰυρὰς, δυςρόπους δὲ καὶ σκυθρωπὰς, ἃι χαίρουσι τοῖς τοιούτοις. It's well known, the *Romans* constantly ascribed the Regimen of their Actions, to their proper *Genius*, assigning two to every particular Person. These did not only attend 'em from their Birth, and suggest Things to the Mind,

 but

but contributed to the forming their very Constitutions. Indeed, it's highly probable, these were Traditions transmitted from the *Greeks* to the *Romans*, and from the *Egyptians* to the *Greeks*, and all founded in the History of the Fall of Man. And truly, *Hierocles*, agreeably to his other Divine Flights, describes the Degeneracy of Mankind in such a lively manner, as if he had taken it from the revealed *Canon*. In the first place, he describes Man in his Original Composition, to be *Pure* and *Uncorrupt*, in both Parts of him, and the express Image of his Maker. Ἔστι γὰρ πᾶς μὲν ὁ λογικὸς διάκοσμος μετὰ τοῦ συμπηφυκότος αὐτῷ ἀφθάρτου σώματος, εἰκὼν ὅλου τοῦ δημιούργου θεοῦ. [*Hier. Comment. in Pythag. Carm. p.* 17. *Ed. Lond.* 1673.] After this, in his Comment on the Nature and Frame of Man, with respect to the Rise, or Origine, of Good and Evil, he represents, with what a powerful Impulse we are carried into Evil, and pronounces it to be the Effect of a wilful Apostasie and Revolt from God, and his Society: Even a Society which we once enjoyed in pure Light, Ἐν αὐγῇ καθαρᾷ; whereby an invincible Propension to the Things of this World is contracted. He confirms the Notion by the

the Doctrine of *Plato*, and *Empedocles*. The whole Discourse is excellent, from *Page* 252, to *p.* 272. The Substance of it is collected by the *Learned Bishop of Worcester*, and applied to the present Argument, with exquisite Force and Accuracy; and therefore supersedes the necessity of another Citation. [See *Orig. Sac. Lib.* 3. *Cap.* 3.]

From all this, it's indisputably evident, the Learned Heathen World were highly sensible of a State of Degeneracy; and tho' the greatest part were in the Dark as to its Rise or Original, yet some of the most Curious had preserved something of the Footsteps of it: However, they were all highly sensible of its dismal Effects and Mischiefs.

But now Revealed Religion has abundantly unfolded this Mystery, by assuring us, that a Native Depravity was contracted thro' the *Transgression* of of our *First Parents*. I know the *Deist*, *Socinian*, and the *Author* of *the Reasonableness of Christianity*, look upon this Doctrine to be a piece of *Cant*, or *Jargon* formed *by the Priests, those wary Guardians of their own Creeds, and profitable Inventions*, as this *Author* has it. But as for the *Deist*, the general Sense of Man-

kind, and the Doctrines of Philosophers, are considerable Arguments to render the reveal'd Accounts of it highly probable: And therefore, unless he were able to disprove the Truth, and Authority, of Revelation, on the same Foot that we overturn any other forged History, I'm perswaded unbiassed Reason will pronounce his Notions, impudent Calumnies, or Detractions. As for the Author's of the *Reasonableness of Christianity*, endeavouring to undermine the Corruption of Human Nature upon *Adam*'s Transgression, (*See* p. 6.) he might have consider'd, that it was always the prevailing Doctrine of the Christian Church. That it is made an Article of the Establish'd Church of *England*; of which he would perswade the World he's a sound and Orthodox Member, and to which Article he has actually submitted. And tho' *the Word of God* has no where in express Terms told us that this natural Depravity is the Seeds of *Adam*'s Transgression, yet there are sufficient Authorities of Scripture, whence we may infer it, by a clear and convincing Consequence. We can prove, that the Descendents of *Adam* were undoubtedly affected in the same manner with that of their Parent,

and

and both by a *Spiritual* as well as a *Temporal* Death; I mean ſuch a Death, at leaſt, as in the Language of *Scripture* implies a diſabling of the Faculties of the Mind, as well as a Diſſolution of the *Animal* and *Spiritual* Principles. In a word, it may fairly be inferred, that, that carnal Principles, that φρόνημα τῆς σαρκὸς, that prevails in the whole Off-ſpring of *Adam*, whereby we are, as it were, *ſold under Sin*, or that reigning Law in our Members, that *brings us into Captivity to the Law of Sin, ſo that when we would do Good, Evil is preſent with us*; is the Effect of *Adam*'s Tranſgreſſion. The *Body of this Death* was undoubtedly derived thorough his Loins, on all his Deſcendents; and the Seeds and Principles of a higher Death were certainly tranſmitted, even tho' eternal Death were not formally imputed by making him the Repreſentative of Mankind, ſince theſe Seeds and Principles, in the Language of the Apoſtle, would at leaſt *work in our Members to bring forth Fruit unto Death*, Rom. 7. v. 5.

I know the great Artifice, to which our Adverſaries have recourſe, to blaſt the Credit of this Doctrine, is, either to oppoſe it to the Juſtice of God, or Ha-

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rangue upon the Impoſſibilities of it: Becauſe God has not clearly revealed, and we cannot fully comprehend how ſuch a Depravity is contracted, much leſs propagated. But, certainly, it was never the Buſineſs, or Deſign of Revelation, to communicate the Manner of the Divine Tranſactions, no more than to Authorize us to reject 'em, *becauſe we cannot comprehend the manner of 'em.* It was never a Rule of Revelation, to make our own Faculties of Perception, in comprehending the Nature of Things, or in reconciling 'em to the ſcanty Notions we have conceived of another Revealed Truth, the Standard, Teſt or Meaſure of Faith. And therefore, to reject the cleareſt Evidence of Original Corruption, becauſe we cannot comprehend how 'tis contracted, or becauſe the Notions of Infinite Juſtice, tho' formed by our ſelves (as we think) muſt ſuffer by it, is Baſe, and Unwarrantable. But however, that our Adverſaries may want the Advantage of this Pretence, I mean, that Original Corruption can no way be accounted for, I ſhall attempt ſomething to demonſtrate how it may be *Contracted*, and *Tranſmitted*.

And

And first. This will easily be accounted for, from the *Nature of Original Corruption*: It's already concluded, That Original Corruption consists in the Exorbitance of the Animal Part, or acts as a *Law in our Members, warring against the Law of our Minds*, contending for an opposite Interest to the Laws of right Reason, or the true Interests of Human Nature. Now, that this Irregularity may be the Effect of *Adam*'s Transgression, there are two or three Circumstances that render it more highly probable:

For first, Tho' the Violation of a positive Law, contains but a simple Act of his Obedience, yet it certainly implies a horrid Violence committed upon all the Powers of Human Nature: When the Tempter displayed his Wiles, and formed his deluding Persuasives, it certainly threw the unwary Offender into the greatest Agonies and Convulsions: It must raise those convincing Apprehensions of the Majesty and Authority of God; it must suppress the Dread of Divine Punishments; it must break thro' all the Guards, and Powers of Conscience, and Fences of Duty; it must alienate the whole Frame of the Soul, take

off those Desires, and Propensions, that engaged us in the Observance of God's Commands, and those Satisfactions that result from the Observance of 'em. In a word, it must extinguish all the Powers of Divine Love, suppress those Flights of Zeal in exercising the Mind, and Thoughts in Divine Contemplations, the Glories and Perfections of our Maker; and in pursuing such Things as will render us remarkably like him: So that this Grand Act of Disobedience, must contain a Complication of impious Debates and Resolutions, before it was committed: For certainly the Powers of Nature being so exquisitely fitted for an Obediential Temper, and the Soul so deeply possessed with a Sense of the uninterrupted Favours and Bounties of God, flowing from his frequent Intercourses, and Communications; the Devil must play his Temptations a considerable time, before he could promise himself success. The Passions and Propensions of Human Nature, must not only be taken off from serving their great Creator, but turned a quite contrary way; they must be strongly disposed in gratifying the *Lust of the Eye, the Lust of the Flesh, and Pride of Life.* And now,

who

who cannot discern the Growth, or Production, of carnal Exorbitances, and consequently the Establishment of Original Corruption? It's concluded, that this single Act of Disobedience, was carried on by a Complication of evil Principles; insomuch, that it seems to have the same Foundation, that in other Cases serves to establish a confirmed Habit; and consequently, it must have the same Efficacy in fixing vicious Propensions, that is attributed to vicious Habits. But now the Contagion of vicious Actions is too fatally confirmed by Experience and Observation, to be disputed in Theory; every Act prepares the way for a Repetition; but a confirmed Habit lays a Bias like a Second Nature; a Bias, that in the Sacred Language, is as uncapable of being remov'd, as the most subtile Productions of Nature: *Can the Æthiopian change his Skin, or the Leopard his Spots?* It's manifest therefore, that the Disobedience of our first Parent, introduced an *Internal Corruption*, by way of Natural Efficacy, not by way of *Divine Punishment.*

But further, this cannot be well disputed, if we take in two other considerable Circumstances that attended the *Fall*; which

which in reality were proper Punishments; I mean a total Exclusion from *Paradise*, and consequently from the special Intercourses of the Divine Presence; and the Curse that fell on the Products of Nature; we must conclude, that the Defection of our first Parents, introduced a perpetual, and almost invincible Corruption.

And first, If we all assert, what with good Reason has been already evinced, that those sensible Adumbrations of the Divine Presence, as well as frequent Intercourses with our Maker, were needful, to preserve a Sense of Duty, as well as Perseverance in it; How fatally must the Exclusion from the Divine Presence expose our first Parents to the Dominion of those Lusts, which their Disobedience had newly engendred? But then, when they are not only *driven from the Presence of the Lord*, but condemned to *eat their Bread in the Sweat of their Brows*, and converse with little, but Thorns and Brambles, and the tedious Methods of Husbandry, how strangely must their Mind and Thoughts be chain'd to Earth, and the insolent Demands of the Animal Appetite? So that, when all these things are fairly laid together, I can attribute no-

nothing leſs to the Diſobedience of our firſt Parents, than what the Word of God aſcribes to a State of Nature, to wit, the Luſtings *of the Fleſh againſt the Spirit, and the Law of the Members warring againſt the Law of the Mind, and bringing 'em into Captivity unto the Law of Sin and Death.* If the Propagation of ſuch a fatal Contagion cannot well be accounted for in the Deſcendents of our firſt Parents, I'm abundantly convinced it muſt unavoidably eſtabliſh itſelf in the Frame of their Conſtitutions. But truly, there's no Colour of Reaſon offers it ſelf, why ſuch a powerful Bias, or Contagion, unleſs ſuſpended by an overruling Power, ſhould not be tranſmitted by the common Laws of Generation.

Indeed, when we conſider how much our Animal Appetites, and Propenſions that are engendred by Habit, depend on the Diſpoſition of the Blood, and Animal Spirits, inſomuch that they often new Model the Natural Conſtitution; I cannot conceive, why a general Contagion of this Nature may not be propagated, as well as particular Features, Complexions, or Conſtitutions? I will readily grant, that ſome peculiar Turns in Nature, may alter the Frame of particular

cular Conſtitutions, and diſpoſe a Perſon to ſome peculiar Vices more powerfully than others; but I'm perſwaded, a change can never be effected by any, but one that has the Sovereign Diſpoſal of the Powers of Nature, *that weigheth the Mountains in Scales, and the Hills in a Ballance*, can prevent all vicious Propenſions from being tranſmitted from the Parent, or their proper Off-ſpring.

And thus, I hope, I have in ſome meaſure given a *Rationale* of an Original Corruption, that repreſents an *unavoidable neceſſity of ſinning and provoking God in all our Actions.* (See *Reaſonableneſs of Chriſtianity*, p. 5.) And yet it is conſiſtent with the infinite Juſtice of God. I have enlarged more fully on the Subject, becauſe it will lay a Foundation to repreſent the *Expediency*, or *Neceſſity* of Revelation.

§ 3. And firſt, Having already concluded, that Man, in his preſent State and Condition, is acted by two oppoſite Principles; involved in two oppoſite Intereſts, and each contending for Government, and Dominion; it may eaſily be diſcerned how our Attainments in Knowledge are affected; whereby Re-

Revelation will become highly neceſſary.

Now, certainly, the Re-ſearches of Reaſon, in ſuch a divided State, can never be elaborate, and correct: For firſt, it cannot be denied, but the Avenues of Reaſon, take their Riſe from the *Animal* Part; and conſequently, all the Materials of Reaſon muſt make their paſſage this way. Nay, further, the *Animal* Appetites, and Paſſions, are the immediate Springs, and Movers of Reaſon; and therefore, ſince it is concluded that the Bias of the Animal Part is ſo formidably ſtrong and powerful, we cannot imagine, but Matters will be ſo ordered as to prevent any conſiderable Diſquiſitions. For by this means the Ideas of things will not only be often diſguiſed, and preſented in a falſe Light, or Dreſs, but the Importunities of the Carnal Part will not ſuffer the Mind to dwell upon any Object, that does not comport with its Intereſt; they will not ſuffer her to place it in the Scales, and try its Worth and Value, by any ſolid Debates and Counſels; and conſequently, Miſcarriages will ariſe, for want of due Application, and Attention of Mind.

Now

Now certainly, since this is the true State of Things, we must place the Acquest of Knowledge under the greatest Difficulties: It will not only embarrass and perplex every Thought and Working of the Mind, but cut short the Scheme of all our Enquiries; and therefore tho' the Fundamental Lines of Duty may discover themselves to Human View, or Perception, we cannot think to launch forth into the Deep, and make a certain Discovery of those consequential Duties, that are absolutely necessary to the Conduct of Human Life. The common Necessities of Human Nature, will introduce the Knowledge of the principal Lineaments, and Proportions of Duty; but we can never descend to a Discovery of some other considerable Parts, and Circumstances, that make up the Complement of Duty. In a word, frequent Retirements, and solemn Exercitations of Thinking may engage such an application of Mind, as will enable her to work off the substantial Parts of the Line of Duty; but without these Arts and Methods, and without Time, and Leisure, a Man may spin out a thoughtless Life; or, at least, the Mind will be weighed down by *Animal* Propensions,

ſions, and employ it ſelf in nothing but laying in *Proviſion for the Fleſh, to fulfil the Luſts of it.*

And, now can any Man pronounce Revelation unneceſſary? What, tho' Providence has not yet left the World or rather the World reduced it ſelf to ſuch diſmal Circumſtances, but that with cloſe Reſearches, and unwearied Vigilance, they may calculate the main Lines of Duty; yet it cannot be deny'd, but we carry a kind of *Ignis fatuus* within, that will be apt to lead a great part of Mankind into Bogs, and a thouſand Miſcarriages; and therefore we cannot think it unneceſſary to be ſecured from ſuch fatal Hazards, and Difficulties by having a Digeſt of Laws laid before us, that remain as an unqueſtionable Standard of Duty. What tho' the common Exigencies and Neceſſities of Nature, the Frame and Condition of our Beings, by the Light of natural Reaſon will direct us to the Ground-work of Morality and natural Religion, it can be no Argument, that the Light of natural Reaſon can enable us to raiſe the Superſtructure; that is, either to accommodate thoſe Laws we can diſcover, to the Caſes and Inſtances of humane Life, ſo

as

as to reduce 'em to Practice; at leaſt ſo as to anſwer the true Ends and Intentions of Living; or to diſcover other Laws that are the Conſequences of prime Laws of Nature, and indiſpenſably neceſſary to the Conduct of Humane Life, to the diſpoſing us for that State of Happineſs, for which God has originally deſign'd us, much leſs to render our Services truly acceptable to God. Certainly if we reflect on thoſe inextricable Clogs, Obſtructions and Encumbrances, wherewith corrupted Nature appears to be encompaſſed; we muſt pronounce it impoſſible, that the Powers of natural Reaſon ſhould carry us thus far: It's certain, tho' natural Reaſon may preſent moſt of the Fundamental Laws of Nature in a rough Draught; yet nothing but Revelation is able to give 'em their finiſhing Strokes, and their proper Graces and Perfections, and diſplay 'em in their Conſequences Appendages and Deductions; I mean ſuch as are abſolutely neceſſary to the Ends and Purpoſes of living well, and attaining to a State of Happineſs: And therefore if natural Reaſon cannot pretend to furniſh us in theſe Caſes, ſhe muſt ſubſcribe to the Neceſſity of Revelation.

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Indeed, I am perſwaded natural Reaſon, by a conſtant Habit of Thinking, and a ſolemn Attention and Application of Mind, may make very lucky Conjectures, very ample Diſcoveries, at leaſt upon probable Evidences, and Convictions in very important Truths: But God knows, as the Frame of Man now ſtands, we muſt attribute ſuch mighty Performances to a *Work* of Time, to the Labours, and Obſervations of Ages; they can only be the Product of a few working Brains, that by a peculiar *Genius* have ſequeſtred themſelves from ſecular Affairs, and conſecrated their Thoughts to the Obſervations of Humane Nature; and yet the Whole at laſt amounts no higher than a few general Maxims, or Poſitions formed from a happy Conjunction of their own Thoughts, and the Obſervations of their Anceſtors; and theſe often claſh and interfere with thoſe of their Brethren, and conſequently can carry no higher Authority or Character than *Learned Conjectures*: And now ſince Reaſon and Experience demonſtrate, as well as dictate the Truth of theſe things, a revealed *Canon* ſeems to be abſolutely neceſſary for the Conduct of Man-

kind, or the Attainment of that Happineſs, which the Light of natural Reaſon in a State of Innocency, would have otherwiſe ſecured. A Revealed *Canon* was neceſſary, to ſilence the immortal Diſputes of the Learned, as well as inform the Illiterate, at an eaſie Expence of Time and Thought. A Revealed *Canon* was neceſſary to give the moſt elaborate Diſcoveries of Reaſon, the Authority of Laws, in as much as it was neceſſary they ſhould be uſhered into the World with the higheſt Credentials of Divinity, and eſtabliſhed upon competent and expreſs Rewards and Puniſhments.

But to conclude this Argument, Notwithſtanding the utmoſt Attainments of Human Reaſon, I can ſee nothing to ſuperſede the Neceſſity of Revelation, but what will as effectually ſet aſide the Neceſſity of Human Laws, and Civil Government. It's certain, That Laws of Nature, diſcoverable by natural Reaſon, anſwer the general Ends and Intentions of Civil Government, and deſcribe the great Lines of Right and Wrong, Juſtice and Equity; they aſſert the Rights of Property, as well as the Obligations of private Compacts:

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If therefore these general Notices be not sufficient for the Conduct of Human Life, even in secular Affairs; we cannot imagine, that the Discoveries of Natural Reason should reach the whole Line of Duty, with respect to God, Ourselves, and Neighbour. In a word, since after the highest Pretences to a natural Light, it was necessary to constitute Civil Governments, and entrust Men of Thought and Parts to work off a Body of Laws, for the Conduct of Mankind in temporary Concerns, by the nicest Consults, Debates, and Observations; how much more necessary is it to receive a Digest of Laws from an Infalible, and Unerring Hand to secure an Eternal, as well as Temporal Happiness?

§. 4. Thus far we have advanc'd the Necessity of Revelation, in order to the Discovery of the Line of Duty; but there is something more behind to improve the Argument: For it's certain, we have hitherto represented the fairest Part of the Landskip of Human Nature; I mean as it lies in a degenerate State: It's certain, it is not only clog'd with those native Encrumbrances, and

Propenſions derived from the Loins of our Anceſtors, that weigh down the Activity of the Mind, but we are all unfortunately brought forth in Impotence; and conſequently are forced to ſuck in the Superſtition and Abſurdities, as well as Impieties of our Parents, of the preſent, as well as paſt Ages. Theſe muſt unavoidably grow up together with our Reaſon, and improve with the Strength and Vigour of our Bodies; ſo that when we arrive to the Uſe of Reaſon, we have not only native powerful Propenſions, but as violent Prejudices to grapple with.

In the firſt Age of the World, where Men enjoyed the Inſtructions of our firſt Parent, the Laws of Good and Evil, Virtue and Vice, were clear and legible; the Stream was pure and untainted, when it juſt iſſued forth from the Fountain; but by length of Tract, it gathered Filth and Mud; for every Age was a Common-ſhore, to tranſmit all its Vices and Irregularities.

This was the caſe of the old World, as it is of a great part of this, at this day; of miſerable *Indians*, as well as hardned *Antediluvians*; *the Imaginations of whoſe Hearts by this means were to do evil continually*,

nually, and their *Understandings being past feeling, were incurably darkned.*

Now certainly, when Men happen to be born under such an unfortunate Climate, where instead of living, they seem to be buried in an invincible State of Ignorance; how is it possible they can ever be reduced to a Sense of Duty, or act like Men, or Reasoning Beings, till they are enlightned by the convincing Beams of Revelation? Whilst their Minds are enclosed in this State of *Egyptian* Darkness, no Wonder if in the Sacred Language they should grope or *seek after the Lord, if happily they might feel him ought, and find him, tho' he be not far from every one of us*; and certainly, if the Case of some poor Wretches in the World was so desperate, that they might easily miss the Discovery of a Law-giver, it's impossible they should form a Body of Laws, as an indispensable Rule of Action. Who can therefore dispute the *Necessity* of a Revealed Dispensation, when Mankind is reduced to such forlorn and dismal Circumstances, any more than suppress and disown the surprizing Graces, and Mercies of it?

§. 5. But further, we may demonſtrate the Neceſſity of Revelation from certain *Defects* in Natural Religion, that are only to be ſupplyed by Revelation; and by this means we ſhall confirm and ſtrengthen the preceding Arguments. And firſt the Neceſſity of Revelation diſcovers it ſelf in the *Notion* and *Worſhip* of a GOD: It's well known, though the Conſideration of our own Frame, and of thoſe things without us, may by the Light of natural Reaſon induce the Belief of a God; and, at leaſt give us an imperfect Idea of his excellent Nature, yet certainly the latter is not to be attained but by Men of Thought and Obſervation. The unthinking Vulgar are ready to reſemble the *Godhead by Gold or Silver, or Stone graven by Art, and Man's Device.* But after the niceſt Diſcoveries, that natural Reaſon can pretend to, we can no where find the Godhead repreſented in its true Graces and Perfections, but in the Book of Revelation. Again, tho' Natural Reaſon muſt dictate, that God is to be worſhipped; yet to calculate the preciſe Way, and Manner of it, ſeems to exceed the Sphere of its Activity: To worſhip God in a ſpiritual Manner by Prayer and Thankſgiving,

ving, ſeems extremely reaſonable, becauſe highly conſonant to his bleſſed Nature; but yet had Revelation been ſilent, Reaſon, that is ſo much immerſed in Senſe, and ſenſible Objects, would never have carryed us much above the groſs, and ſcandalous Ways, and Rites of Heathen Worſhip. *The whole World* in theſe Caſes *lay in Ignorance and Superſtition*; and therefore the Purity and Honour of God ſeems to induce a kind of Neceſſity, or Obligation on him, to make a Reform by a revealed Diſpenſation: It's his Prerogative to determine what Worſhip his Creatures ſhall pay him; and the actual Determination of it, is the Buſineſs of Revelation.

Again, The Neceſſity of Revelation is abundantly expreſſed in the Enforcements of Divine Laws: For tho' natural Reaſon might inform us, that Rewards and Puniſhments are the inſeparable Conſequents of the Obſervance, or Violation of Laws; yet it can never pretend to ſtate the Nature, or Meaſure of 'em; and yet this ſeems abſolutely neceſſary to a due Enforcement of Laws, to ſecure an Obedience agreeable to the general Intention of 'em, It's the Prerogative of every Law-gi-

ver to assign proper Rewards and Punishments; and if the Supreme Law-giver of Mankind has not done it in a State of Nature, it's highly necessary he should do it under a State of Revelation.

Lastly, I would fain know, whether natural Reason can make a compleat, and convincing Discovery of the History of the *Creation*, or that of the *Fall*, and the dismal Consequences of it; of the Order *of Spirits*, and particularly of the Malevolence of the *wicked One* and his *Associates*; of the Nature of the *Soul*, and its *Immortality*; and of the Nature and Certainty of a *Future State*: These are certainly Things of the highest Importance in the Affairs of Religion; and tho' natural Reason, and a nice Thread of Thought might advance a great many noble Speculations; yet we find the Learned discoursing of some of 'em, as a kind of happy Presages, rather than establish'd Truths. *Nescio quomodo inhæret in mentibus quasi Sæculorum quoddam Augurium futurorum.* [Sic. Tusc. Quæst. Lib. 1. Tit. 4. p. 350.] And certainly nothing, besides the special Communications of Heaven, could settle such weighty Points of Philosophy: These alone were only able to silence the Eternal Disputes, and Distractions

ſtractions of the Heathen Schools. The World view'd 'em but *thro' a Glaſs darkly*; but Revelation preſents 'em *Face to Face*. The World in theſe Caſes was like the Men of *Sodom*, ſtruck with Blindneſs, and groping for the Door; the Key of Knowledge. They are the Beams of Chriſtianity, that are only powerful enough at once to melt off the Scales, and convey a full Ray of Light into the Soul: It's a Peculiar of the Chriſtian Inſtitution, to diſplay the Nature, and Certainty of a future, *and exceeding Recompence of Reward, and bring Life and Immortality to Light through the Goſpel.* It's another Peculiar, to preſent Mankind with a true Landskip of 'emſelves, and the Miſeries of their former Condition; to diſplay the indefatigable Attacks of the Prince of the Power of the Air, *the Spirit that worketh powerfully in the Children of Diſobedience*, and the true Methods of fencing againſt him: Are not theſe Diſcoveries of the higheſt Importance? Are they not indiſpenſably neceſſary to render us Favourites of Heaven, to ſecure Peace and Safety in this World, and to conduct us to the Regions of Happineſs in another? If theſe things are ſo, to diſpute the Neceſſity

ceſſity of Revelation, is a greater Argument of the Iniquity of our Will, than Judgments, ſince it is not want of Evidence or Conviction, but the weight of Baſeneſs and Ingratitude, that obliges us to reproach and quarrel with our Great Creator for his ineſtimable Mercies.

§. But further, another Argument of the Neceſſity of Revelation will ariſe from the *Miſchiefs*, which the *Fall* has brought on Mankind, in reference to *Practice*. Indeed here an Original Corruption does ſufficiently ſignalize it ſelf; here it diſcovers its Strength and Authority in a very remarkable manner. For it's the general Complaint of Mankind, that the *Animal* Propenſions weigh down the Soul to that degree, that ſhe is not able to purſue thoſe Duties which ſhe plainly diſcovers to be ſuch. The moſt exalted Heathen Moraliſts, the moſt improved Aſceticks always confeſſed their Impotence in Matters of Practice; they freely acknowledged that their Actions fell infinitely ſhort of their Informations, or the Line of Duty. The Orator has long ſince obſerv'd, That the wiſeſt Sages among the *Greeks*, as well as *Latins*, could diſcourſe and write

write upon Virtue after a magnificent Manner, tho' they ſhamefully miſcarried, where it was to be reduced to Practice: *Quibus cum facere non poſſent, loqui tamen & ſcribere honeſte & magnifice licebat.* [Cic. Orat. pro Cœlio, p. 448. Ed. Lond.] *So that it was not the Knavery of Prieſts, in filling the Heads of their People with falſe Notions of the Deity, and their Worſhip with fooliſh Rites; or in excluding Reaſon from having any thing to do with Religion, that obſtructed the Progreſs of Virtue, as a late* Author *on every turn has ſuggeſted,* [See Reaſonableneſs of Chriſtianity, p. 257, 264.] *but the Corruptions of Human Nature, that rendred the beſt Rules and Inſtructions almoſt uſeleſs.* But now, ſince Mankind ſeems to be placed under moral Impoſſibilities of acting purſuant to the Lines of Duty; it's abſolutely neceſſary ſuch Proviſions ſhould be made, as might put them into a Condition to bring their Actions in ſome Meaſure up to the Line of Duty.

And, certainly, nothing leſs can ſecure ſo great a Work than a written Code, and thoſe Methods Providence has contrived to enforce the Obſervance of it. By this means their Time and Thoughts will not be engroſſed in deep

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Reſearches after the Line of Duty; and conſequently a competent Share of both may be reſerved in advancing Arts and Methods to enforce the Practice of it. By this means the World enjoys a ſtanding Order of Men, by *Divine Appointment*, whoſe Office is not only to preſerve the Line of Duty entire and uncorrupt; but to preſs and inculcate the Obſervance of it by all the Methods of Perſuaſion. By this means the Overtures of ſpiritual Succours are aſcertain'd, to facilitate the Practice of Virtue; and certainly, where ſuch unmerited Acts of Grace are conferred, God may well be allowed to publiſh his own *Canon*, and require a ſuitable Obedience to it, eſpecially when the doing it is another Act of Grace, and unſpeakable Condeſcenſion.

§. 7. But to proceed; the moſt convincing Argument, to repreſent the Neceſſity of Revelation, derives from the *Neceſſity of a Mediator*. It's abundantly concluded, That *the whole World lieth in Wickedneſs*; we certainly carry the Seeds and Principles of Sin about us, *that will bring forth Fruit unto Death*: or, *A Law in our Members warring againſt the Law of our Minds*, and *bringing us into Captivity, unto the Law of Sin.* This

This is not a piece of *Spiritual Cant*, invented by any *Designing Leaders* of an *Unthinking Herd*; we have traced it in it's Original; for *by one Man Sin entred into the World, and Death by Sin.* And tho' the Sin of this one Man may not be allowed to be the *formal Sin* of the whole World; yet the *Seeds* and *Principles* of Sin, engendred by this Sin of one Man, and propagated *in* him thro' the World, cannot be denied. In this Sense, at least, *Death passed upon all, for that all have sinned.* In this Sense, *all have sinned*, and come *short* of *the Glory of God.* In this Sense, the whole Race of Mankind *were by Nature the Children of Wrath.* The Vengeance of Sin did undoubtedly hang over our Heads, in a State of Nature; and consequently Deliverance and Safety can only be expected in a State of Revelation. For, nothing but *God, who is rich in Mercy, for the great Love wherewith he hath loved us, even when we were dead in our Sins, hath quickned us together with Christ*; *by this Grace we are Saved.*

Natural Reason will inform us, That the *Wages of Sin is Death*; for since every Sinner lies at the Foot of Infinite Mercy, the Methods of Redemption are lodged in the Hands of God, to be esta-

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bliſhed as he ſhall think fit to reveal himſelf. If God intends a Redemption, infinitely more valuable than that Death which he might have exacted in every Man's Perſon, he may rightfully pitch upon his own Methods, and eſtabliſh his own Laws of Redemption. The Wiſdom and Purity of his own bleſſed Nature would induce him to contrive a Redemption ſuitable to the Nature of the Puniſhment, as well as Crime. He therefore reſolved upon a Subſtitute, or *Mediator*, and required Death for Death, Blood for Blood, even the Blood of the *Immaculate Lamb of God*, a Sacrifice not only negatively Pure, but of infinite inherent Worth and Value.

It was therefore abſolutely neceſſary, God ſhould communicate himſelf by ſome ſpecial Revelations. The Condition of Mankind was ſuch, that they muſt be eternally miſerable, without ſome ſpecial Communications, and Intercourſes with their Maker; and it was an Act of infinite Grace and Mercy, that God was pleaſed to make his Propoſals to his Off-ſpring. This, certainly, introduces a freſh Covenant between God and Man: God was obliged to ſignifie all his Propoſals of Grace and Mercy, or

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the Riches of his Love, and consequently it was not only extreamly fit, but necessary, that he should give us an entire Body of Laws, established on express Sanctions; and that these should remain as inviolable Conditions on our part, to oblige him to make good all his Overtures and Dispensations. Thus the necessity of Revelation is established upon a Train of Causes, and issues forth of the certain Frame and Posture of Human Affairs and Exigencies. Tho' Natural Reason could instruct us in the Line of Duty, and we acted with Ingenuity and Abilities to regulate our Lives conformable to it; yet, in as much as we have been Sinners, nothing less than a new Covenant established in a Mediator, can entitle us to the Favour of God, or that Happiness to which we were originally created. Let the *Deist* then ridicule the revealed Dispensations of his Maker, as long as he pleases, there's nothing, as yet, revealed, but what is wonderfully accommodated to the State and Condition of Human Nature; nothing but what a Mind, that is not grown leud, and wanton with Lust, will acknowledge to be the Effect of Necessity, as well as infinite Bounty; and he that disputes it,

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I'm perſwaded, is embarked in the ſame Deſign with the *Pſalmiſt*'s Fool, *That hath ſaid in his Heart, There is no God.*

§. 8. I hope I have in ſome meaſure removed this mighty Objection; and, certainly, nothing remains, but a ſhort Return to the Abſurdity, which our Adverſaries would throw upon us: *If Revelation*, ſay they, *were neceſſary, God muſt be obliged to have publiſhed it to the whole Race of Mankind.* I'm perſwaded, there's no Neceſſity for Thought, or Art, to expoſe, or uncover the Nakedneſs of this Objection. It's abundantly concluded, That Man is the Harbinger to his own Miſery; and conſequently it's an Act of Grace in God to ſend Overtures of Deliverance. If he is the Sovereign Lord of Grace, as well in reſpect of the Time, as the Meaſure and Extent of it; there's no Injuſtice in confining it, either as to Time or Place: It's ſufficient that he has taken competent Methods for publiſhing his own Diſpenſations, whereever he obliges Mankind to the Conditions of it. Upon the whole then, Revelation is neceſſary, and yet this Neceſſity does by no means interfere with a Law of Nature antecedent to it.

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The Reader is desired to make the following Amendments:

ADD *and*, line 23. p. 4. *them*, read *Revelation*, p. 6. l. 9. *the* r. *this*, p. 18. l. 18. add *an* after *and*, p. 25. l. 16. omit *of*, p. 28. l. 12. omit *if*, p. 29. l. 25. *to* r. *of*, p. 38. l. 4. add *if*, p. 39. l. 28. add *en* to *graved*, p. 43. l. 12. *we* r. *he*, p. 46. l. 12. *Rev.* r. *Lev.* p. 48. l. 19. *of* r. *for*, l. 22. ib. add *there are* after *and*, p. 58. l. 25. add *only* after *not*, p. 89. l. 11. *Conscientia* r. *Conscientia*, p. 92. *dictate* r. *dictates*, p. 114. l. 19. *Intrusion* r. *Invasion*, p. 135. l. 7. add *any* after *away*, p. 136. l. 9. omit *is*, p. 140. l. 9. add *as* after *well*, p. 140. l. 28. *from* r. *the*, p. 151. l. 26. *yet* r. *yes*, p. 161. l. 19. omit *tho'*, p. 169. l. 22. add *his* before *Off-spring*, p. 180. l. 1. *Portion* r. *Notion*, p. 185. l. 2. *Natures* r. *Nature*, p. 242. l. 8. omit γὰρ, p. 254.

In the Preface *stand* r. *stands*.

In the Introduction, omit *Men*, p. 2. l. 8. omit *his*, p. 8. l, 23. νενινύναι r. γεγονέναι, for πᾶσι r. πάσον, for πῶς ἔτι r. πῶς δ' ἔτι, for θεόμισες r. θεομισές, p. 11. ἐνθεῖαν r. ἐυθεῖαν, for ὑφηχυμένης r. ὑφηγυμένης, for γένεσιν r. γένεσν, p. 12. ἐπόμεναι r. ἐπόμενοι, for πόλλυς r. πάλαι, for ἰυρὰς r. ἰσχυρὰς, p. 13. *Agreeably* r. *agreeable*, p. 14. l. 8 *Author's* r. *Author*, p. 16. l. 11. *Principles* r. *Principle*, p. 17. l. 8. omit *to* after *and*, *submitted* r. *subscribed*, p. 16. l. 20, 21. *or* r. *and* l. 5. omit *more*, l. 13. *His Obedience* r. *Disobedience*, l. 16. p. 19. Omit *all* after *we*, p. 22. l. 9. *Or* r. *on*, p. 24. l. 10. *They* r. *Men*, p. 27. l. 9. *Sic* r. *Cic*, p. 36. l. 25. *Weight* r. *height*, p. 38. l. 4. Omit *the* after *of*, p. 44. l. 20.

THE Grounds and Foundation OF Natural Religion, ASSERTED.

CHAP. I.

A Law of Nature antecedent to Revelation.

AND first for the *Divine Authority of a Law of Nature* antecedent to Revelation, I ſhall appeal to the Voice of Scripture, as an Argument to thoſe that own the Truth and Divinity of it. *For when the Gentiles, which have not the Law, do by Nature the Things contained in the Law, theſe having not the Law, are a Law unto them-*

themſelves; which ſhew the Work of the Law written in their Hearts, their Conſcience alſo bearing Witneſs, and their Thoughts, the mean while, accuſing, or elſe excuſing one another, Rom. 2. 15, 16. It's manifeſt when our Apoſtle tells us of a Gentile Law engraven on the Heart, here is a Law diſtinguiſhed from a Law of Revelation: For the *Gentiles having not the Law*, (no doubt the revealed Law of God, and particularly the Jewiſh Law) *are a Law unto themſelves.* It was not a Law that reſted on Patriarchal Revelations, or a Law given by Inſpiration, but a Law engraven on the Heart, peculiar to Heathens, or Men in a pure State of Nature; and conſequently no revealed Law. For by virtue of it, they did *by Nature* (not Grace) *the things contained in the Law*; that is, upon the Evidence and Convictions of Natural Reaſon, not on the Authority of any external Revelations. For *whilſt the Gentiles did by Nature the things contained in the Law, they ſhew the Work of the Law written in their Hearts*; that is, they had a Rule of Action, implanted in the very Frame and Conſtitution of their Natures, which anſwered to all the Deſigns and Intentions of a Law, or rather carried in it all the

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Properties, as well as Force, and Efficacy of a Law: For the Work and Business of a Law, is to prescribe between Good and Evil, Just and Unjust; to direct us in the precise Line of Duty, and enforce the Observance of it by suitable Rewards and Punishments; and if the Gentiles have this *by Nature*, they are in a strict and proper Sense *a Law unto themselves*, even without the concurrence of Revelation. Indeed the Apostle elegantly represents the Force, and Authority, as well as Sanction of the Law, when he tells us, that Conscience gives testimony to this Law, συμμαρτυρούσης, and, as it were, confirms, and ratifies it as a Law, or Rule of Action, which answers to the first Office of Conscience, by the Learned called συντήρησις. The Sanction follows from the second Office of Conscience, call'd συνείδησις, which consists in the Application of our Actions to the Rule, and passing Sentence upon ourselves for it; *and their Thoughts mean while accusing, or excusing one another.* From the words it's manifest there is a Law of Nature, or a Rule of Action given by God, by which he, at least, originally design'd to govern Mankind antecedent to all positive Laws, whether Divine or Humane.

Nay, it's not only a Law designed for Man in his original Frame, but a Law that maintains its Force and Authority, even in the lapsed State of Mankind. For it's manifest, the Apostle speaks of the Gentiles as they then lay (and all the World too) in a depraved corrupted State. They were undoubtedly under a Law, tho' without any revealed Law, and that too, under the highest force and efficacy of it: For the Apostle expressly determines the case, *For as many* (of the Gentile World) *as have sinned without Law, shall also perish without Law.* v. 12.

However, thus far it is indisputably evident, that the Heathen World was under a Law, or an Indispensable Rule of Action, or Duty, and we are abundantly assur'd, that it was distinct from any revealed Law; since Scripture in other places expressly fixes the Duties of Natural Religion, in an evidence that results from the Works of Providence, the Dictates of Natural Reason, not in any revealed Traditions. Thus St. *Paul*, and his Associate, speaking of the Gentile State, *Nevertheless he left not himself without Witness*, (no doubt sufficient to instruct them in their Duty) *in that he did good, and gave us Rain from Heaven,*

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and fruitful Seasons, filling our Hearts with Food and Gladness, Acts 14. v. 17. And again, *The Wrath of Heaven is revealed against all ungodliness; because that which may be known of God is manifest in them, for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the Creation of the World are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made.* Rom. 1. 18, 19, 20. I know the learned Dr. *Hammond* appropriates this latter Passage to the Gnosticks, but against the whole current of Commentators: And indeed the Context, both before and after, carries such peculiar Characters in it, as renders it absurd to fix it upon any but the Heathen World. If so, it's evident they are *the things that are made, and Rain and fruitful Seasons*, that are Witnesses, and shew forth to us, *that which may be known of God*, or the lines of Natural Religion.

So that the Works of Nature and Providence are our Instructors, not the Voice of Revelation. Here's not the least Hint of any Traditional Conveyances, the Works of Nature carry an Evidence in them; but they are the Reflections of Natural Reason upon them, that draw the Conclusion and form a Duty from them; so that whatever Difficulties, or

Impoſſibilities ſome Men may ſuggeſt from the Imperfections, and Weakneſſes of Natural Reaſon in decyphering a Law of Nature, it's evident, the Sacred Oracles have given it no other Foundation or Original. And this is Conviction ſufficient to ſilence all other Arguments in thoſe that ſubſcribe to the Truth and Divinity of them.

And for thoſe that reject it, I ſhall, purſuant to the Mind of our Apoſtle, endeavour to prove a Law of Nature, implanted in the Minds of Men, as Rational Beings, and conſequently, originally deſign'd, as a perpetual Standard and Meaſure of their Actions.

This I ſhall endeavour to perform, 1*ſt*, By proving, that Man is naturally a Thinking, Reaſoning Being. 2*dly*, That Man naturally Thinks and Reaſons in a fixt determinate way. 3*dly*, That by the exerciſe of Reaſon, and the condition of his Nature, he can diſcern the Subject-matter of the Laws of Nature. And 4*thly*, That he diſcovers it as the Subject-matter of a true and proper Law, eſtabliſhed on a competent Authority, by diſcerning and receiving it as the Command of God.

§. 2. And

§. 2. And 1*st*, That Man is by Nature a Thinking, Reasoning Being.

Indeed, that an Order of Rational Creatures, can of 'emselves exert the Powers of Reason, seems to be a Proposition, that carries its own Evidence in the Terms of it. And to imagine a Creation of Rational Powers and Faculties, and that too ascribed to an infinitely wise Creator, and yet deny an inherent Power of exerting 'emselves, seems to reflect the highest Folly and Disgrace upon the Contrivance. For it either represents Infinite Power and Wisdom, displaying 'emselves, as we say, in vain, or to no purpose, or labouring under the greatest Imperfections. It represents the great Exemplar of a Creative Power, to be little else than a senseless, unactive sort of Machin, whose Efforts entirely depend on foreign Impulses; and *the expreß Image and Representative of a glorious Creator*, in one sense, to be of a baser Alloy than the unthinking Brutes that perish; Since these, in their original Frame, were made to exert those Powers and Faculties God thought fit to impart to 'em. But Man must by no means act like himself, or display any of his Natural Powers and Fa-

culties, unleſs he has the good Fortune to be Born under the Influence of *a ſkilful Tutor*, and *a poliſh'd Education*. But certainly this is a Conjecture void of any ſhadow of Reaſon. For whoſoever conſiders the Activity of the Souls of Men, (a Truth I think of univerſal allowance and approbation) cannot imagine, that Men, even in this State, ſhou'd not be capable of perceiving, diſcerning, comparing, or thinking at all. But that we may proceed with greater Clearneſs in theſe Matters, let us endeavour to ſtrip Mankind of all the Embeliſhments of Education, and turn 'em into the pure Garb of Nature; and thereupon let us, for once, ſuppoſe a Set of Men ſprung up like Muſhrooms in an inſtant, and placed in an unpeopled Iſland in their full growth and vigor. Some, perhaps, in this caſe, are ſo fond of attributing the whole Product of Humane Knowledge to the Buſineſs of Education, that they would deny them the Power of exerting one Faculty peculiar to a Rational Being without it. But certainly this is a Notion highly improbable, if we conſider, that the great Reaſon why our Infant State diſcovers ſuch faint Glimpſes of Thought or Reaſon, is not ſo much from any native Obſtructions

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in the Mind, or an Indisposition of her Faculties, in receiving and forming Idea's, but from unknown Indispositions of the Animal Part. For the Souls of Men being to act through Flesh and Blood, or Material Vehicles, no wonder if they do not exert 'emselves till these are throughly fix'd and setled, that is, before they arrive at a due state of Maturity, or a suitable Disposition or Temperament: And therefore were Men to enter upon the World under an exact Disposition of the Animal Part, it's highly probable the Faculties of the Rational Part wou'd exert 'emselves with wonderful vigour and expedition. Indeed it must be confess'd, that Idea's will be collected, and Principles setled at a much slower rate, where they are only gain'd by a Man's single Observation and Experience, than where the Instructions of Parents and Tutors contribute to the Improvement. By this Means the Observations and Attainments of past Ages are presented in an established Method and Order, and added to our own Experience, and consequently the growth of Idea's will be more quick, clear, and lasting. But yet when the Organs of Sense are rightly fixed and disposed, and the

the Mind lies under no real Incumbrances or Eclipſes, it's ridiculous to imagin, that it cannot exert itſelf by its own native Light and Activity, in all its Powers and Faculties: and we may as well affirm, that a Man would not walk or perform any other indifferent Actions, as a ſenſitive Creature, without Inſtruction; as affirm, that he cou'd not think and exert all the Powers of Reaſon, without ſpecial Inſpiration, Revelation, or Inſtruction. It's viſible there are certain Springs or Movements implanted in the Frame of Nature, that ſerve to put all Native Powers and Faculties into their proper Motions: And therefore we muſt conclude, that a Rational Soul, or a Soul framed for Reaſon, muſt act agreeably to its original Frame, and diſcover itſelf in all the Functions of Thought and Reaſon. It's certain, the great Law of Self-preſervation, a quick and piercing Senſe of Pleaſure and Pain, and the inceſſant Deſires of Eaſe and Happineſs, which, ſtrictly ſpeaking, are rather Natural Inſtincts implanted in all Senſitive Beings, than Laws peculiar to Free Agents, will ſerve as forcible Springs to every Native Power or Faculty, and furniſh 'em with ſuitable Objects, as well

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as prompt 'em to exert upon 'em; and consequently if Rational Faculties in their Original Frame are fitted for Thought and Reason, they will by an Intrinsick Impulse exert in all the Parts and Offices of 'em. And therefore, to have recourse to the Instance already given, we may justly conclude, that meer Salvages wou'd not only fall to Thinking, but after a few Interviews, form Signs, and Words, and Language, apply 'emselves to the setling of all the Instruments of Reason and Knowledge. I'm perswaded, few will deny, that Man by his Natural Powers cou'd form Words and Language, and Words necessarily suppose Idea's and Thoughts. To conclude this Argument then, As Man, by a Law of his Creator, is peculiarly fitted with Organs for Speech and Language, so is he endued with Faculties of Reason; and since he's capable of exerting the one in all its Designs and Functions, we may justly allow him the same Abilities in exerting the other; and, in one word, it derogates from the Wisdom of God, to endue a Creature with Noble Powers and Faculties, and not put him into a condition to exert 'em. Therefore we may conclude, that as Man, by a native Endowment,

ment, can ſee, and hear, and ſpeak, he can likewiſe think and reaſon, which is the Firſt General propoſed in order to eſtabliſh a Law of Nature.

§. 3. I proceed to the Second, which is to prove, That we think and reaſon in a fix'd and determinate way. And certainly this is a Truth ſo clear and evident, that it does not admit of any colour of diſpute: For otherwiſe I cannot conceive why we may not queſtion the Perception of the Senſes, as well as that of the Mind. The outward Senſes, in moſt Caſes, are a kind of Perſpectives to the Mind: and the Mind muſt certainly receive its Notices from the Impreſſions which outward Objects make upon them; and if Objects make an Impreſſion upon the outward Senſes ſuitable to the Nature of 'em, they muſt do the ſame upon the Mind too. So that the firſt Act of the Mind, that of Perception, muſt neceſſarily be regular, and unalterable; for 'tis a Faculty of receiving the Impreſſions of outward Objects, and of framing Idea's ſuitable to the nature of 'em; inſomuch that where the Object is rightly applied and attended to, the Idea is as certain and unalterable, as Colours

lours to the Eye, or Heat and Cold to the Touch. But now, as the Powers of Perception are certain and unalterable, ſo are the Powers of Reaſon; at leaſt in the original frame of 'em.

For Reaſon, being nothing but the comparing of two or more Idea's to gain a third, or form certain Concluſions and Deductions from 'em; as long as the Perception is regular and correct, Reaſon muſt be ſo too; eſpecially where there's a due Application of the Object or Idea, and attention of Mind too. Indeed that the Reaſon of Mankind is fixt and certain, or acts in a true and regular Sphere, is evident from a Complication of Arguments.

As 1*ſt*, It cannot be imagined why Reaſon ſhou'd not be eſtabliſhed upon certain Rules and Meaſures, as well as all other Powers of the Creation; and it's a manifeſt Reproach caſt upon the Author of Nature to allow, that the Laws and Appetites of the Vegetative and Animal Part of the World ſhould be fix'd and regular, and that the Powers and Faculties of the Rational Part of the Creation a random kind of Ordinance, altogether precarious and uncertain. But then, whoſoever allows God to be the Author of our Beings, God to be the

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Standard of Wisdom and Reason, and the Reason of Mankind to be an immediate Transcript of it, must conclude, that Reason is established upon fix'd Measures and Principles. For God is unalterable in all his Measures and Workings; his Wisdom and Reason is uniform and invariable, consistent with it self; and that Reason he has imparted to any of his Creatures, and consequently the Reason of Mankind must correspond with all this in a lower degree or proportion. So that where all Impediments are removed, where Idea's or Objects are presented to the View of the Mind, and the Mind closely attends to 'em, the Appearance of Things must be the same every-where; I mean in every Intelligent Being. The Reason of one Man must be the Reason of every Man, and the Reason of Men must be the Reason of God and Angels too. This, perhaps, would be allowed to be an unquestionable Truth, had Man retained the Primitive Lustre and Perfection of all his Intellectual Faculties; or were not false Idea's suggested, and true ones disguised by the Corruptions and Exorbitances of the Animal Part. But certainly this does not destroy but perplex the Workings of Rea-

Reason; it discovers the Imperfections and Difficulties, not the Uncertainty of Reason; the Mind is by this means often call'd off, and deprived of that Application and Attention, which is indispensably required in the Disquisition of Things, and particularly in the Discovery as well as Observance of all Laws. But when these are secured, I mean when there's a due Application and Attention maintain'd, Reason will be the same in a depraved and degenerate State, as it was in a State of Innocence. Indeed I'm perswaded the true Reason why Man under a degenerate State is so much affected in his Intellectuals, is the Violence and Exorbitance of the Animal Appetites, whereby the Mind is called off from deliberating the true Nature of Things, and consequently determins in conformity to 'em upon any plausible Suggestions and Appearances; or if she has conceived true Idea's, yet they are in a great measure suppress'd and stifled by the Impulses of Lust, and she carried away by the powerful Overtures of a present Pleasure. But I do not find, that the Mind in this State is absolutely disabled from discerning the true Nature of Things or Actions. The Sallies of the Animal

Animal Part are not always ſo powerful, but there are certain Minutes or Intervals wherein ſhe may attend to, and deliberate upon peculiar Objects; and conſequently compare and form juſt Concluſions, according to the Meaſures of right Reaſon: So that we may, without Derogation to any State of Grace, affirm, That we are not under abſolute Impoſſibilities in Decyphering the Line of Duty by ſtrict Reaſonings, though we may be deſtitute of Native Strength, to maintain an Uniform or Steady Practice. Thus much the Chriſtian Inſtitutions warrant and confirm, when the Heathen World is concluded under Actual Sin, and *as many as have ſinned without Law*, are doomed *to periſh without Law*. For no one will be damned for Impoſſibilities. But after all, ſhould we allow, that the OEconomy of Reaſon, in this lapſed State, is very much ſhaken and diſſolved; ſo that all our Reaſonings are very precarious and uncertain; yet we cannot but conclude, that it was originally eſtabliſhed upon fixed Rules and Principles; and conſequently, that we were formed by an Intrinſick Power and Efficacy, to exert every Faculty in ſuch a manner, as wou'd enable us to anſwer all thoſe Ends

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and Designs that God hath laid upon us as Men and Reasonable Creatures. And this is sufficient to expose the Assertion of our Adversaries, that will have all our Notices enter the Soul, as it were, by Chance, that is, by Revealed *Tradition*, *Education*, or *Instruction*. It's manifest they do not reject our Attainments of this kind upon the Argument of Native Depravities, but upon the Argument of Native Imperfections: In as much as the Soul, being *Rasa Tabula*, is equally prepared to receive contradictory Impressions; and consequently its Native Powers and Faculties imply nothing but a Capacity to receive the Informations or Instructions of others. Upon the whole then, since it's concluded, that the original OEconomy of Reason is even (in a lapsed State) only vailed and sully'd, not wholly defac'd; we may still affirm, that the Soul retains a Faculty of Thinking and Reasoning in an establish'd way: Insomuch, that when Objects are fairly presented to the Mind, and the Mind dwells and deliberates upon 'em, she will still be determin'd according to the Nature, Properties, and Agreement or Disagreement of the things 'emselves. And therefore we are thus far advanced to-

wards a Law of Nature, that we are acted by a Principle which serves to steer and direct us in the disquisition of the Subject-matter of a Law or Rule of Action, and that too such a Rule as serves as a Law, not only to particular Persons, but to the whole Species. For since it is concluded, that Man is acted by a Principle that naturally Thinks, Perceives, and Reasons, and this Thought, Reason, and Perception is founded upon uniform Measures and Principles, it must prescribe in common to the whole Species, as well as particular Persons.

§. 4. The next Inquiry is the Subject-matter of the Law of Nature, how this arises, and is discover'd to us so as to form a Law upon it: And 1*st*, To state the Matter with greater clearness, give me leave to have recourse to the Instance already assign'd, that of Savages, placed in the World without the Bias of *Education* or *Instruction* upon 'em. It's already concluded, that Men, even in this pure State of Nature, are Thinking, Reasoning Beings; and it may reasonably be imagin'd, that the great Law of Self-preservation, or an incessant Desire of Ease and Happiness, will be the Spring and Move-

Movement to their firſt Thoughts and Reaſonings. This, as has been already obſerved, is rather a Natural Inſtinct, implanted in all Senſitive Beings, than a Law given to free Agents. For every Individual, that is capable of Pleaſure or Pain, is violently diſpoſed to ſecure his own Preſervation; and therefore thoſe Beings that are endowed with Rational Powers and Faculties, and can Think, Deliberate, and Examin the Nature of Things, will certainly turn the Mind upon 'emſelves, and engage their firſt Thoughts in ſurveying the Nature and Condition of their Beings. For without ſome knowledge of this kind, it's impoſſible they ſhou'd apply themſelves to the true methods of Self-preſervation. And hence, no doubt, ariſes the Subject-matter of the Law of Nature. For certainly all thoſe Laws, which have juſtly obtain'd the Name or Character of Laws of Nature, are formed from the Conſideration of Ourſelves, or which is the ſame thing, from the Conſideration of the Nature and Circumſtances of our Beings, compared with thoſe things that are without us. That this is not a groundleſs Conjecture, the Rule of Social Virtues eſtabliſhed by our Bleſſed Saviour, and advanced by the

beſt Moraliſts, ſufficiently atteſts: *Whatſoever you wou'd that Men ſhou'd do unto you, do you that alſo unto them.* Here's a manifeſt Appeal to ourſelves; and conſequently implies a ſtrict ſurvey of our Nature, and the relation we ſtand in to other Beings, as well as of our own Wants and Neceſſities. And certainly, whoſoever turns his Mind and Thoughts upon himſelf, and conſiders his own Frame and Original, his Dependences and Methods of Subſiſtence, will preſently furniſh himſelf with Matter enough to make up the Laws of both Tables; thoſe we owe to God, and thoſe we owe to Men. A little Thought will inſtruct us, that we were formed by ſome firſt Cauſe, who muſt be infinite in all his Attributes and Perfections: And as little Thought and Obſervation, that this firſt Cauſe implanted certain Paſſions in our Natures; ſuch as Love and Hatred, Hope and Fear, and all the intermediate ones; ſuch as Admiration, Tenderneſs and Compaſſion, as well as Anger, Averſion and Fury; and conſequently we muſt conclude, that the Author of Nature has adapted them to peculiar Objects, and appointed 'em to ſpecial Ends and Purpoſes. And from hence we have a clear view of thoſe Du-

Duties we owe to God; ſuch as Love, Worſhip, Fear, Reverence, Truſt and Dependence: For the conſideration of a Creator, and our dependence on him as Creatures, will inſtruct us, that we are to devote the chiefeſt of thoſe Powers, Faculties, or Paſſions he has implanted in us, to his Service and Honour. Again, for the Laws of the Second Table, the conſideration of the methods of our Subſiſtence will inſtruct us, that we are in a great meaſure maintain'd by foreign Aids and Succours, that we ſubſiſt upon the Art and Bleſſings of Labour, as well as Nature; and theſe are to be carried on by Creatures that can Reaſon, Think, and Project as we do: And this will prompt us to Society, and ingage us to apply ourſelves to thoſe Creatures that moſt reſemble ourſelves, and are moſt capable of ſerving or adminiſtring outward Goods and Bleſſings to us. The neceſſary methods of Subſiſtence, and the condition of our Natures will preſently inſtruct us in the Rights of Property; and conſequently give us a view of the Neceſſity of Promiſes, Compacts or Ingagements, and our indiſpenſable Obligations to maintain and execute 'em. And from all theſe Notices reſults the

Law of univerſal Juſtice. We cannot kill nor aſſault the Perſons of our Neighbours, becauſe it's a wounding or ſtabbing our ſelves; ſince it cuts off that Circulation of Bleſſings we live by. We cannot ſpoil or plunder the Goods of our Neighbour, becauſe that affects us in the ſame manner as that of Murther. To proceed, hence reſult the Laws of univerſal Love, Tenderneſs and Compaſſion: For we find theſe Paſſions implanted in the Frame of our very Natures; And where can we think to fix and exert them better, than on thoſe that contribute to our Subſiſtence? This naturally begets a Senſe of Benefits, and thoſe of Love and Compaſſion. In a word, Self-preſervation ſuggeſts Self-love, and a Tenderneſs, and Kindneſs towards ourſelves; and conſequently it will exerciſe the very ſame Affections to the benefit of others. For ſince Love, Tenderneſs, and Compaſſion, are the moſt powerful Ingagements to link others to our Intereſt, and our Intereſt and Welfare reſts upon the Welfare of others; to be kind, compaſſionate and loving to others, is to be ſo to ourſelves. Theſe are Laws recorded in ſuch legible Characters, that the Subject-matter of 'em has diſcovered itſelf to meer Savages, that

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sprung up like Mushrooms, tho' there were no such Relation as Husband and Wife, Parent or Children, or in a word, were no way allied or dependent but by the common Condition and Principles of Humanity. Here needs no long Train of Thoughts, Consequences and Deductions, whereby the Mind under the highest Improvements is often bewildred, overset and confounded. The common Necessities of our Natures and the condition of our Beings, forcibly direct us to the discovery; a single Inference will give us a full view: So that were the Mind left to her own native Exercitations, before she had contracted a Bias from Example, or a vicious Education, they must unavoidably appear in some of her first and earliest Reasonings. Indeed I will not affirm, that every one in this case cou'd discover the Subject-matter of the prime Laws of Nature, in that Train of Thought, or from those very Topicks and Arguments that are here projected. It's sufficient if they are natural and obvious, and carry an Evidence suitable to what they are apply'd and are design'd to prove. There may a thousand Arguments suggest the same thing, and therefore it is not material which way we

come by it. That which is moſt conſiderable is, that it appears the Subject-matter of the Laws of Nature, lies upon the Surface, and offers itſelf to the firſt Dawnings of Reaſon: It is as fixt and certain as the firſt workings of Reaſon (for both reſult from the eſtabliſhed Frame or Nature of Things) and is mixed with the prime Ends and Intereſts of our Beings; and we muſt firſt change the Courſe of Nature, and new model the Creator as well as the Creature, and give new Faculties, new Paſſions, and new Beings, before the Matter of the Laws of Nature can be changed. Thus we have advanc'd a conſiderable way in the Proof of a Law of Nature; ſince it appears we are acted by a uniform Principle within, that is able to furniſh us with the Subject-matter of Laws or Rules of Action.

§. 5. But now, ſince the Subject-matter of Laws is fixt and determined, the laſt Requiſite to give any thing the Character of a Law, is to eſtabliſh it upon a competent Authority, whereby the Counſels and Dictates of Reaſon are advanced into indiſpenſable Rules of Action. It's certain Reaſon is the ſovereign Principle of the Man; and conſequent-

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ly if ſhe pleaſes, may paſs an Obligation upon all her own Decrees, as far as concerns the particular Perſon, where ſhe preſides. But ſhe cannot paſs an Obligation upon other Perſons, without ſome binding Authority, that preſides over her and them too; and conſequently cannot eſtabliſh a Law of Nature, which carries an Obligation, that extends to the whole Species; this ſuppoſes an Authority ſuperiour to that of particular Perſons. Again, the natural Conveniences, and Inconveniences of things may engage us to embrace and purſue particular Dictates of Reaſon; but theſe Dictates of Reaſon may not be a binding, and indiſpenſable Rule of Action; ſo as to render us criminal in caſe we do not purſue, and imbrace them; which is the Purport, and Buſineſs of all Laws. And therefore, before theſe Dictates of Reaſon are to be received as true and proper Laws; we muſt prove, that they are impoſed by a competent Authority, an Authority that has a Right to impoſe a Rule of Action upon us; an Authority that has a Right to impoſe the Dictates of Reaſon as a Rule of Action, and that this Authority has actually impoſed 'em as Laws, and conſequently, the Non-obſervance of 'em muſt

muſt bring Guilt and Puniſhment upon us. Theſe are all Poſitions that muſt appear in the workings of Natural Reaſon, before any Dictates of Reaſon can paſs for Laws of Nature. Now this will abundantly appear by placing the Authority of Laws of Nature in the Author of Nature; for tho' that which we call Reaſon or Conſcience, is the Law-giver, that immediately preſcribes, determines, and fixes the Obligation of our Actions; yet this is but a delegated Authority, derived from the Author of Nature, the very Author of Reaſon and Conſcience, and our very Beings too. So that Reaſon acts by the Authority of a Vicegerent, but the Original Sovereignty derives from God, or the Author of Nature. Natural Reaſon and Conſcience is but a Law-giver, like *Moſes* that delivered the Law to the People; but the original Authority is ſeated within the Cloud of Glory, and the Divine Nature; whoſe Face no Mortal can behold, and live: That there is a God, and an Author of Nature, the conſideration of ourſelves will abundantly evince; and the Right of God's Authority in impoſing Laws, and particularly in aſſigning Reaſon and Conſcience a power of giving Laws, cannot be diſputed. For he that

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gave us our Being, may rightfully aſſign the Laws of our Being. Therefore we ſufficiently prove the Authority of Laws of Nature, if we can prove that God, as our Creator, has appointed certain Dictates of Reaſon for an indiſpenſable Rule of Action to Mankind. And certainly this is a Poſition almoſt Self-evident; for it follows from the bare Allowance and Conſideration of the Author of Nature. If Natural Reaſon aſſures us that God made us, and not we ourſelves, we muſt conclude, that we have the Strokes and Lineaments of Infinite Wiſdom ſet forth in us. For, the Works of Nature and Providence, are no leſs an effect of Infinite Wiſdom, than Power: *For in Wiſdom hath he made them all.* And if it was Infinite Wiſdom that induced a Creator to give us ſuch a peculiar Model, whereby we are diſtinguiſhed from the reſt of his Creatures, the ſame Infinite Wiſdom muſt intend we ſhould act and govern ourſelves by it. The Intention of the Law-giver is as much expreſs'd by reaſonable Creatures, acting upon Dictates of Reaſon, as by the Powers and Tendences of Inanimate Beings purſuing the Courſe and Order of Nature. He hath given Laws to the Waves of the Sea,

Sea, *that they may not paſs*; *and to the Sun that knoweth his going down*, Pſal. 104. v. 18, 19. And ſhall not Man, the Glory of his Maker, and the proper Subject of a free and valuable Obedience, be obliged by the Laws of his Creation; and make that the Rule of Action, which Infinite Wiſdom has made the Mark or Characteriſtick of his Being; whereby he is diſtinguiſhed from the inferiour Claſſes of the Creation, as well as Evidences of his Creator's Honour and Glory? In a word, ſince God perpetually acts by the Dictates of Infinite Wiſdom and Goodneſs, his own Inſtitutions or Ordinances are an indiſputable Evidence of his moſt ſacred Will and Pleaſure; and the Laws of all his Creatures are as amply recorded in that Frame and Conſtitution he has given 'em, (being all as much bound to act by 'em) as if he had recorded 'em on Tables of Stone. For 'tis a Record engraved on Nature, and conſequently will be preſerved as long as Nature has a Being. Theſe are Notices that offer 'emſelves to the firſt Dawnings of Reaſon, or, at leaſt, flow in upon an Aſſent to this fundamental Truth, that we are the Product or Workmanſhip of an All-wiſe and Almighty Creator.

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§. 6. But further, the Authority of Laws of Nature is evident from the Ends and Deſigns of Created Nature.

And 1*ſt*, As Natural Reaſon inſtructs us, That there is a wiſe and intelligent Author of Nature, even the Author of that very Faculty we call Reaſon, which ſuggeſts thus much to us; we muſt conclude, that he neither gave Being to that nor any thing elſe, without annexing ſome ſpecial Ends and Deſigns to it. If therefore, to purſue the Dictates of reaſonable Creatures, can only ſecure thoſe Ends for which we were created reaſonable Creatures, the Dictates of Reaſon muſt carry the Authority and Obligation of Laws in 'em: But now ſhould we pronounce one ſpecial End of Man's Creation to be the Manifeſtation of his Honour and Glory, and particularly the Exemplification of his Wiſdom and Power; it's manifeſt the only way to anſwer this Deſign, is to exert thoſe ſurpriſing Faculties God has beſtowed.

Again, If God did create Man a reaſonable Being to make him capable of Happineſs, and put him into a condition of attaining it; It's certain he deſigned him for Happineſs by implanting ſuch in-

inceſſant Deſires after it; and its certain there is no way of attaining Happineſs, but by purſuing the ſtrict Dictates of Reaſon. Happineſs can conſiſt in nothing but the perfection of our Natures, or in a reſemblance of their primitive Model, and the great Original they repreſent: And it's Reaſon alone, and a courſe of Action advanced upon it, that can exhibit this Happineſs in its true Lineaments and Proportions.

In a Word, Were Happineſs carried no further than the welfare of the Animal Part; It's certain, that Temperance, that Friendſhip, that Generoſity, and that Juſtice, which Natural Reaſon, from the very frame and condition of our Natures, ſuggeſts and preſcribes, are the only Inſtruments for ſecuring it; therefore we muſt conclude, ſince an *All-wiſe* and *Almighty Creator* could not act Blindfold; ſince he aſſigned every Order of Creatures peculiar Ends, and eſtabliſh'd a general End from all of 'em; and ſince an All-wiſe Creator muſt be concerned to have thoſe Ends anſwered, which he hath aſſign'd; Reaſon muſt be a Rule and a Standard of Action in all Reaſonable Creatures; without which the Ends and Deſigns of Reaſonable Creatures cannot be

be attain'd. And thus we have the Intention of the Law-giver evinced from the Ends and Designs of reasonable Creatures.

§. 7. There is one Argument more that proves the Obligation and Authority of Laws of Nature, and certain Dictates of Reason to be such; and that is, From the consideration of Rewards and Punishments that flow from 'em.

It's well known that Rewards and Punishments are an inseparable Appendage of a Law, and where we are not only directed by a lawful Authority, that this or that thing is to be done, but Rewards are annexed to the doing of it, and Punishments to the omission of it, or at least doing the contrary, there the Authority is expressed and represented; and consequently the thing directed is proposed as a Law or Rule of Action. But now it's already concluded, that those Dictates of Reason which necessarily arise from the Frame and Condition of our Natures, carry inseparable Rewards in 'em, and the Violation of 'em entails inseparable Mischiefs or Punishments upon us; and therefore such Dictates of Reason do as evidently declare the Intention

on of the Law-giver, and the Obligation of Laws, as if we were told it by an audible Voice from Heaven: And thus we have aſſerted the Authority of Laws of Nature, being the laſt Requiſite aſſigned for the Proof of 'em. And, truly, there are ſo many Arguments ſuggeſt it, that we may as well deny that we can Think by Nature, as be ignorant of the Authority of Laws of Nature.

§. 8. But, after all that has been ſaid concerning the Authority of Laws of Nature, ſome perhaps will imagine that the Arguments already ſuggeſted, are rather the Improvements of Reaſon, under a State of Revelation, and the Diſcipline of a civilized Education, than the Diſcoveries of Reaſon, in a pure State of Nature. I muſt confeſs, it is difficult to diſtinguiſh the pure Efforts of Natural Reaſon from thoſe Improvements ſhe receives from Revelation, and a poliſhed Education; but certainly we may appeal to Revelation itſelf, for the Authority of Laws of Nature, and particularly that the Dictates of Natural Reaſon are to be the Meaſure and Standard of our Actions. For, firſt, Conſcience we know is the Reſult and Decree of Reaſon; and this

this is advanc'd to such an absolute Sovereignty in the Christian Institution, that we cannot reject the Instructions of an erroneous Conscience, without entailing Sin and Guilt upon us. For even to Heathens and Unbelievers, *Whatsoever is not of Faith is Sin*; and certainly it amounts to a Demonstration, That if God has given no other Rule to Reasonable Beings, but Reason to act by, we must conclude, that Reason must be the Standard of Action; and consequently every one is under an Indispensable Obligation of pursuing it, unless we can imagine we are not to exert Actions peculiar to our Nature, or that God has not as industriously distinguished the Actions of Men from those of Brutes, as their Souls and Shape too. In a word, whosoever owns the Truth and Authority of the Christian Institutions, must discern the Truth and Authority of Laws of Nature; for he may plainly read both in the great End and Design of Christianity; for the whole OEconomy of Grace consists in restoring the OEconomy of Nature, and renewing that Image of our Minds, in which we were created; or which is the same thing, in the Apostle's Language, *In being renewed*

in Knowledge after the Image of him that created him, Col. 3. 10. In a word, Christianity is the *putting on the New Man, which, after God, is created in Righteousness and true Holiness*; and the putting on the New Man, is the putting on the first Man that was formed after the Image of God, *in Righteousness and true Holiness*; therefore we must conclude, that Model which God impress'd on our Nature was design'd to be a Law, and a Rule, or Standard to our Actions, and consequently the Powers of Natural Reason, wou'd have thought it to be a Law, had Revelation never interposed in the Matter. Thus we have proved, that there is a Law of Nature, even in all the Circumstances and Formalities of a Law; it's a Law distinct from the Law of Revelation, since it arises, and is discovered to us by pure Dint of Natural Reason; it's a true and proper Law, for it contains the Matter and Form of a proper Law, the Subject-matter is fix'd and determin'd. It has the Form of a Law, because it determines what is to be done, and that too upon a just and competent Authority, and when all this is granted, it gives us the Sanctions of a Law, I mean Rewards and Punishments.

For

For if Reason dictates certain indispensable Rules of Action, from the Authority, Will and Pleasure of a Sovereign Creator, Reason must, besides those natural Rewards and Punishments that accompany the Observance of such Rules, at least acknowledge, That the Non-observance of 'em, must bring Guilt and Punishment upon us. And therefore I see nothing wanting (notwithstanding Mr. *Hobbs*'s Notions of a Law) to give it the Title and Denomination of a proper Law. For it's as much, *Vox imperantis*, and as truly promulg'd, as if it had been recorded in Writing, or engraved on Tables of Brass.

Chap. II.

Objections Answered.

IT now only remains, that something be offered to take off the Force of those Objections, that are advanced against this Hypotheſis, of a Law of Nature excluſive of Revelation. The Sum of which is, in a few words, this:

Whatſoever has been hitherto attributed to the Powers of Natural Reaſon, ſeems to exiſt no where but in the Imaginations of Speculative Men. For not only the Lives and Opinions of Heathen Nations, but of the moſt eminent Moraliſts and Phyloſophers have overturned the Scheme, and paſſed off the Stage of the World under the Conduct of quite oppoſite Notions. This is an Objection that will fall in with other parts of this Diſcourſe, and conſequently will require ſomething of a Return under each reſpective Head; but that I may lay a Foundation for a clear and diſtinct Anſwer, I ſhall take liberty to make a few Remarks upon the *Origin* of *Error*.

§. 1.

§. 1. And, first, it's a very unquestionable Truth, that the Errors of Mankind are originally founded in vicious Habits or Immoralities; or to speak in other Terms, the Seeds of this kind of Corruption are certainly lodged in the Propensions and Habits of the Animal Part. For that which has such an Ascendent over us, to command us to Act in favour of it, will infallibly influence our Judgments. This is so obvious, that in wilful Enormities, I mean such as were first committed against the Convictions of the Mind, the Power of Animal Propensions, Assiduity of Practice, and a kind of Natural Intimacy or Familiarity resulting from it, has at last engaged Reason itself to appear as an Advocate for it; and very often it makes such elaborate Researches for Arguments to support the Cause, that at last it declares for the Justice and Innocence of it, and asserts it upon Principle and inward Conviction. I am perswaded, and can without breach of Charity or Justice, affirm, That the Growth of the fouleſt Heresies in the Christian World is to be placed in this Original. Men have so long given the full Reins to Pride, Ambition, Co-

vetousneſs, or other vitious Luſts and Propenſions, that they have called in their whole Stock of Parts and Learning, and made Converts to their Judgments to ſupport them, or revenge their Diſappointments.

And now, upon this Bottom, we may ſilence all Objections brought from the abſurd, and Heterodox Opinions of certain Moraliſts and Philoſophers. For, it's highly probable, they were at firſt but exquiſite Apologies to Patronize importunate Paſſions and confirm'd Practices; and conſequently can be no real Prejudices to a Law of Nature. Indeed, the impure Doctrine of the *Gnoſticks* may be as well admitted a juſt Plea againſt the Truth and Purity of Chriſtianity, and the Evidences for both, as ſome few lewd Doctrines of Philoſophers againſt the Certainty of a Law of Nature, upon the Evidences of Natural Reaſon.

§. 2. But, to enlarge a little on this part of the Objection, it's well known that the fouleſt and moſt abſurd Opinions, charged on particular Philoſophers, are by others recorded as an eternal Mark of Infamy and Reproach due to 'em; and conſequently they are by no means

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a just Balance to the substantial Reasonings of others, in deciphering Laws of Nature. We might add to all this, how unjust a Measure the Practices of Mankind is of their real Notices of Moral Good, an Argument too fatally demonstrated under a Christian Dispensation; and consequently tho' the Generality of Philosophers liv'd in Opposition to Laws of Nature, and some few taught contrary to 'em, yet it's no just Consequence to place Laws of Nature above the Researches of Natural Reason. I am perswaded some of the Instances presented in a late Conference *, do not fall under the Character of prime Laws of Nature; and consequently do not reach the Author's Design. It's very well known, *Plato*'s Model for Peopling his Commonwealth was not by a Community of Women, without Limitations from the Civil Power. But for the precise Limitations in this matter, as well as the manner of Worshiping God, whether by Sacrifices and corporeal Representations, I presume, it's the business of Revealed Religion to fix and determine. As for his Instance of Masculine Venery, *Zeno*, and his Followers pronounced it indifferent; I presume it was a previous

* *See* Conference with a Theist, *Part* 2. *p.* 56, to *p.* 64.

Practice that had made it appear ſo. And yet St. *Paul* ſpeaks of ſome of theſe unnatural Whoredoms as things ſcarce named among the Gentiles, 1 *Cor.* 5. 1. But it were highly to be wiſhed that ſome Nations in the Confines of Chriſtendom, had wholly eſcaped the Contagion; ſo that if ſuch vile Practices in a State of Nature may be an Argument againſt Laws of Nature antecedent to Revelation, it will be of Force againſt written Revelations: Since Laws of Nature founded in the Dictates of natural Reaſon, may be as eaſily violated as any written Law. Certainly ſuch avowed Practices may with greater force of Reaſon be allowed againſt a Law that pretends to no higher Authority than Revelation, or ſupported by Tradition. Laſtly, As for the *Grecian* Piece of Cruelty, in expoſing Children to the Mercy of Beaſts, and Travellers, without remorſe, I preſume the Practice was not frequent, becauſe it muſt be the Concern and Intereſt of every Government to ſuppreſs it. But it's well known, the Chriſtian World is not wholly freed from ſuch Monſters, who I am afraid are acted by no other Dread but what the Apprehenſions of a Diſcovery, and the

the Penalties of the Law extort from them. However, this is an Inſtance ſo abſolutely repugnant to the common Bowels of Humanity, that it as effectually diſproves thoſe Earnings which natural Inſtinct diſcovers in the whole Order of Brutes towards their own Off-ſpring, as that natural Reaſon diſcovers the ſame Earnings to be a point of Duty to Mankind. In one word, the Cruelties of Heathens is no more an Argument that natural Reaſon doth not teach the contrary, than the Barbarity of ſome particular Chriſtians an Argument, that Chriſtianity does not exhort to Bowels of Compaſſion, and a Parental Care towards their own Off-ſpring.

But to return: A ſecond Cauſe of Error is certain Prejudices or Prepoſſeſſions imprinted on the Mind by Example and Education. The Cauſe and Origin of Error already given preſents us with the Propenſions and Bias of Humane Nature, and conſequently how liable the World is to be overſpread with Error. At leaſt Matter of Fact informs us how wide the Actions of Men deviate from the Line of Duty, ſo that it may truly be ſaid of the Heathen World, That the *Imaginations of their Hearts is to do Evil* con-

continually. Certainly then, where a Contagion extends itself not only to the Judgments, but Practices of Mankind; and not only corrupt Principles, but vitious Examples prevail in Parents, Guardians and Tutors, the Minds of their Descendents will be deeply impregnated with pernicious Prejudices and Prepossessions. They are implanted among the first and earliest Impressions, even before the Powers of Reason exert themselves. This, I am confident, is the Case of the uncultivated Regions of Mankind: And certainly, when Reason comes to exert it self under such a fatal Bias, no wonder if she often falls into very gross Miscarriages. And yet this is the inevitable Portion of Mankind, that are brought forth in a State of Impotence, as well in Mind as Body; and can hardly arrive to any Growth in Reason, before they arrive to a Maturity in Body. But now, these things being laid together, and admitted; it's very unjust to reject the Divine Oeconomy of Laws of Nature antecedent to Revelation, because the unavoidable Prepossessions of some Men have carried them besides the Mark, so as to contradict the general Lines of Duty: For, it's apparent,

parent, were Men to enter the World in the Strength and Power of Reason, without the Clog and Encumbrance of antecedent Prepossessions (as in the Instance already given, *See* Chap. 1. Sect. 2.) It's impossible but the Fundamental Line of Duty must present it self to the first workings of Reason; and the prime Laws of Nature would be as legible to the Eye of the Mind, as they would be to the outward Senses, when graved on Tables of Stone. But now, as the Case stands, I mean with regard to a degenerate State; the Objections before us prove no more than the Miscarriages of Reason, but do not overturn that Frame or Model which God hath established. So that Reason in her Enquiries after a Law of Nature, appears to be placed under great Difficulties; but yet Laws of Nature may, for all this, be the Product, and Workings of natural Reason.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Of the Argument of Universal Consent.

HAving now, in some measure, Answered what I proposed; *which was to prove a Law of Nature antecedent to Revelation*, and rescued the *Hypothesis* from the Objections that threatned it; before I dismiss this Argument, I shall offer something in reference to what a late *Author* has advanced against the Argument of Universal Consent, under colour of exploding innate Ideas, or practical Principles; but will serve as well against a Law of Nature.

§. 1. And first, it's very observable, This *Gentleman* has industriously amass'd together all the Filth and Off-scouring of a reprobate Mind, and a defiled Conscience, and of a People that seem'd to be abandoned by God; and consequently nurs'd up in a universal Impiety. He has sent us to all the Creeks and Corners of Barbarity under the Verge of

of Heaven, to see Rapes, Murders, and the vilest Incests practised, with universal Approbation and Allowance; yea, rather with an Opinion of Vertue and Merit; to see whole Nations or Tribes of Men living *without God in the World*, without any Foot-steps of Worship, or so much as a Name for God. [Lock's *Humane Understanding*, B. 1. Cap. 3. §. 9.] And upon all this concludes, *That there is scarce that Principle of Morality to be named, or Rule of Vertue to be thought on, (those only excepted that are absolutely necessary to hold Society together, which commonly too are neglected betwixt distinct Societies) which is not somewhere or other slighted, and condemned by the general Fashion of whole Societies of Men, governed by practical Opinions, and Rules of living quite opposite to others.* §. 10. *And the Argument drawn from all this, is levelled against universal Consent, and innate Principles:* [For thus the Author, §. 9. *Where then are those innate Principles of Justice, Piety, Gratitude, Equity, Chastity; or where is that universal Consent that assures us there are such inbred Rules?*] And certainly the Argument carries the same Force against a Law of Nature, and the eternal Distinctions

ſtinctions of Good and Evil: For may not the Latitudinarian in Triumph demand, Where is that univerſal Conſent, that aſſures us there are Laws of Nature, or indiſpenſable eſtabliſhed Rules of Morality? Nay, to have recourſe to his Methods of Arguing, ſince contrary practical Principles are aſſerted by whole Nations as the avowed Rules of Living; ſince Remorſe in ſome attends the vileſt Enormities, whilſt others think they merit by 'em; may not we expoſtulate, Where are thoſe natural Meaſures of Right and Wrong, thoſe natural Diſtinctions of Good and Evil? *See* §. 9, 10, 11. *Certainly theſe are Deductions as ſtrong and cogent, as thoſe againſt innate Principles:* I am ſure they will paſs for ſuch in the Judgment of ſome Men that careſs *Mr.* Lock's *Doctrine concerning Innate Ideas*, ſince he is not content to explode all innate practical Principles, but aſſigns no other Foundation or Original, beſides Cuſtom, Education, the Superſtition of a Nurſe, or the Authority of an Old Woman. *See* §. 22, 23, 26. *This Author, in a Letter to the* Learned Biſhop of *Worceſter, obſerves, That the Foundation of all Religion, and genuine Morality, being eſtabliſhed in the Belief of a God,*

God, no Arguments that are made use of to work the Perswasion of a God, should be invalidated, *page* 113, 114. *And, certainly Reason should have obliged him, to have used the same Caution, not only in invalidating Arguments that are advanced to prove a Law of Nature, the true ground of Morality; but in advancing Arguments that do not more directly destroy the Doctrine of innate Ideas, than a Law of Nature. It's true, were the Doctrine of innate Ideas, or practical Principles no way to be disproved, but by exposing the Conceipt of universal Consent, the Method had been very pardonable; but this Author confesses, that were the Argument admitted, it proves no Idea or Principle to be innate,* B. 1. Cap. 2. §. 3. *And therefore I am afraid he was acted by no good Design, to muster up all his Forces against an Argument that does him no Disservice, especially when his Methods of attacking it, are more fatal against the whole Body of Morality.* But to make some Returns to these Harangues, I shall not now consider how far practical Principles may be said to be innate, this will fall in its proper place; but I think we have no reason to cashier the Argument of universal Consent, which if there is any such thing

thing, must be a considerable Evidence of a Law of Nature, and the irreconcilable Distinctions of Good and Evil. And first, I think Mr. *Lock* needed not to have sent us to *Africa* and the *Indies*, to the most rude and uncultivated Parts of the World, to explode the Doctrine of an universal Consent, as to Chastity, Humanity, and other moral Vertues. For the sacred Canon, if he will allow it to be Authentick, would have furnished him with national Enormities that were as much the Fashion of their Countries and the approved Rules of Living, as any he has produced. Did not the seven Nations practise the vilest Incests, was it not a piece of Devotion to sacrifice there Off-spring to *Moloch*, See *Rev.* 18. *Ezek.* 23. and in a word, to practise a thousand Abominations? As for particular Nations that had not so much as a Name of God (if in reality there were any such) I think they were not more remarkable, than those *that had not God in all their Thoughts*. And when the vilest Immoralities are produced with a national Esteem and Approbation, I think they are not worse than those St. *Paul* has charged the Heathen World with, in more places than one,

one, *who being past Feeling, have given themselves over to Lasciviousness, to work all Uncleanness with greediness.* [See *Ephes.* 4. v. 18, 19. *Rom.* 1. v. 20, 25.] and yet I think there can be no just Authority against an Universal Consent, as to Laws of Nature, or Practical Principles. If this were so, Universal Consent may be as well rejected in the Proof of Rational Faculties, or at least in the Establishment of Reason and Truth upon any certain Foundation; and consequently they are to be resolved into meer Chance or Fortune: for the Contradictions (recorded by St. *Paul*) to the plain Rules of Morality, are as absolute Contradictions to the Allowance or Supposition of Rational Faculties, and the natural Frame and Foundation of Reason, as they are to Laws of Nature, or the natural Features of Good and Evil. The Mistake, I think, is obvious from a very few Considerations, tho' God has implanted Faculties of Reason, which, if rightly exercised and applied, will discern Things as they really are, and pronounce certain Matters or Things, indispensable Rules of Action: Yet, since there's a fatal Bias on our Natures, and these Faculties do not Act necessarily, nor are Things al-

ways duly presented to their View, nor do they yield a due Attention to 'em; Notions may be impressed, that may almost overturn the very Frame of Nature, or destroy the natural Appearances of Good and Evil, Vice and Vertue; and therefore Men may by the Bias of Education, Custom, and irregular Appetites, come to espouse the most horrid Impieties, for Heroick Vertues; may practise the grossest Enormities, not only with Approbation, but an Opinion of Merit. I'm sure Christianity supposes little less, when we are assured of *Seared Consciences*; *when the Mind, or Understandings, as well as Consciences, may be defiled*, Tit. 1. 3. when the Understanding may be darkned (to that degree) as to *be past Feeling*, and to *give us up to work all Uncleanness with greediness*. And in a word, when we are instructed that Men may be abandoned by God, and consequently may be given up *to walk in the Vanity of their Minds*, *to vile Affections*, and *to work all Uncleanness*. This may be the Case of private Persons, and of publick Societies too; and no doubt it is the Case of the miserable *Indians* at this Day, as it was once of the Seven Nations. And when such invincible Ignorance and Impiety

piety has over-ſpread a Land, and is become an eſtabliſhed Rule of Life to Parents, Governours and Tutors, it muſt (without ſome diſtinguiſhing Overtures of Grace) be entailed and tranſmitted to Poſterity. But yet for all this the Argument of Univerſal Conſent, as to Laws of Nature and eſtabliſhed Rules of Morality, cannot juſtly be Arrained, we may as well queſtion Man to be a Reaſonable Creature, at leaſt on the Authority of Univerſal Conſent, becauſe there are ſome Fools and Ideots; or a Creature of Symetry and Proportion, becauſe there are ſome Monſters in the World; as argue againſt an Univerſal Conſent, becauſe the Barbarity of ſome Nations contradict it. It's true, Mr. *Lock* endeavours to take off the force of the Argument, ſince he ſeems to call the Judgment of other Nations, that have preſerved the great Lines of Laws of Nature, the *private Perſwaſions of a Party*; whilſt we eſteem 'em the only Dictates of Right Reaſon, *B.* 1. *Cap.* 3. *§.* 20. But I hope thoſe vile Practices he has tranſcribed from thoſe that only retain the Figure of Men, are not to paſs for the *Dictates of Right Reaſon*, nor they *the Men of Right Reaſon*: And conſequently

their Votes or Opinions are not to be received againſt that Univerſal Conſent we contend for, for certainly, when we appeal to Univerſal Conſent, we cannot be ſuppoſed to appeal to Monſters, Apoſtates, Reprobates or Devils; and yet there may be whole Nations that will fall under one of theſe Characters. Again, It's poſſible that natural Powers and Faculties may be ſo far abuſed, as to loſe their native Vigour and Activity; ſo that Men may live in a State of Inconſideration and Thoughtleſſneſs, and become as Ignorant and Careleſs of every Thing, but what the Example and Cuſtom of their Country ſuggeſts, as the unthinking Brute that periſheth. And this may be the caſe of Tribes of Men as well as private Perſons, and no doubt is the caſe of the uncultivated Negro's; and therefore it would be highly abſurd to take in their Judgments and Opinions, to make up that Univerſal Conſent we contend for.

§. 2. Upon the whole then, when we have recourſe to Univerſal Conſent, for the Proof of a Law of Nature, it only implies an Appeal to thoſe Nations or People, that in the Judgment of improved

ved Reaſon, have paſſed under the Character of Poliſhed or Civilized; or that have been juſtly ſuppoſed in ſome meaſure to have exerted thoſe Powers and Faculties in Thought and Obſervation, which God has implanted in the original Frame and Conſtitution of Mankind. And certainly we have always had the joynt Conſent of ſuch Nations, for moſt of thoſe Rules and Precepts, which, in the ſtricteſt Senſe, are eſteemed Laws of Nature: I'm ſure they have ſignified or declared it in the moſt unqueſtionable Way or Manner; Inasmuch as they have been ſelected for the general Subject of civil Laws, and the Practice of 'em enforced by certain civil Penalties or Sanctions. And certainly this is the ſtrongeſt Argument or Preſumption for Laws of Nature that may be, ſince we cannot imagine, why diſtinct Nations and Societies of Men, eſtabliſhed upon different Maxims and Rules of Policy, as well as Models of Government, ſhould conſpire in the Subject-matter of ſo many Laws; unleſs they were by the Light of Reaſon diſcoverable to Mankind, as indiſpenſable Rules of Action. And thus I hope I have ſatisfied the Demands of all reaſonable Enquirers, in proving a Law

of Nature antecedent to Revelation, or positive Humane Laws.

Chap. IV.

Reflections on some Passages in the Conference with a Theist, Part 2.

§. 1. HAving in some measure drawn the Line, and laid the Foundation of natural Religion, or Laws of Nature antecedent to Revelation, I cannot but discover my Dissatisfactions with the Opinion of a late Author, that places the Whole of natural Religion in the Authority of Revelation, that will allow it no other Original but Revelation, and no other Means of Conveyance and Preservation, but Oral Tradition. [See Conference with a Theist, *Part* 2. *Page* 32. 36.] Indeed this seems to be a Notion advanced without well considering the Nature, Probability, or Consequences of it. For first, the manner of its Conveyance by Oral Tradition (which this Author was forced to admit of) seems to expose it as a groundless Conjecture. I know he endeavours to remove the Force of

of this Argument, by telling us, That *the Duties that paſs under the Characters of Laws of Nature, are ſo natural to the Underſtanding, ſo eaſie to be embraced by it, and upon Propoſal ſeem ſo to be extreamly Uſeful to Mankind, that they muſt be aſſented to, and can never be miſtaken or forgot*, p. 36. And conſequently there was not the leaſt neceſſity of any written Records. But certainly this is a Confeſſion, which if well conſidered, ſhould have directed him to the very Notion he labours to expoſe. For if Laws of Nature are ſo natural and obvious to the Underſtanding that they muſt be aſſented to, he might very well have allowed that their extream Uſefulneſs to Mankind would have prompted and enabled Reaſon to have made the Diſcovery, without borrowing the whole from Revelation: Certainly, if Reaſon, by its own intrinſic Light and Activity, could not go thus far, he muſt ſuppoſe the Souls of Men, tho' *God's expreſs Image and Repreſentative*, to be the moſt imperfect, impotent Parts of the Creation. But then that Laws of Nature are not ſo eaſily aſſented to, or can never be miſtaken or forgot, I ſhould have thought his own Remarks upon the Lives and Doctrines

ſtrines of Philoſophers, and in a word, on the Manners and Notions of the Heathen World, had been a ſufficient Confutation. Moſt of theſe, we muſt ſuppoſe, received ſomething from his imaginary Line of Tradition, and therefore ſince he has made 'em ſo baſely to pervert the Rules of it, he might have juſtly concluded that Providence, who knew well what was in Man, muſt have judged it neceſſary to have inculcated Laws of Nature, either by frequent Viſions, or committed them to Writing, as well as the other parts of his revealed Will. And therefore his own Objection ſeems to ſtand good againſt him, on his own Principles: *That Tradition is not ſo proper a means to convey Morality by to Mankind, becauſe of its liableneſs to Corruption, and that it would have been more ſenſibly vitiated than we find it is, had it deſcended by this Method.* And truly the Objection carries force in it, for were Humane Reaſon ſo deſperately Impotent, as the Picture he ſeems to have preſented the World with, repreſents; I cannot conceive what Service a few blind Oral Traditions would have done to preſerve the leaſt Footſteps of Morality. But to examine the Truth of the Conjecture, under

under the Instance he has given, that of the *Indian*. Indeed it's very notorious the Regions of the *Indian* World are reduced to the lowest Ebb of Humanity, and lodged under the grossest Cloud of Ignorance, there being not much left but Humane Shape to introduce a Thinking Mind to believe they are endued with Humane Souls. But as for those small Remains of Morality, were they to submit to a strict Examination, I'm perswaded, we should hardly find them Resolving 'em into the Advice or Commands of their Fathers and Grandfathers, or pretending a Succession from the great Parent of Mankind, *Adam*. This is certainly an Account as unknown and unthought of, as native Inscriptions, or a *Rationale* founded in a large train of Consequences. But yet tho' 'tis ridiculous to imagin that such illiterate Mortals should resolve every Term or Notion into its Simple Ideas, (especially such as a late Author has projected) yet I do not question, but they would offer at something from the Intrinsic Nature of the things themselves, that would determine and engage their Choices; something that would in some measure bespeak them Men, and Reasonable Creatures. I will grant that

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Opinion as well as Practice may be often eſtabliſhed upon Cuſtom and publick Example, without accounting for the Nature, or Reaſon of the Things themſelves. But then Cuſtom conducts us to ſome Original that is not very remote, where we may find it eſtabliſhed on the higheſt Convictions and Evidences of Reaſon; and it may be no leſs than what are ſufficient to eſtabliſh a Law of Nature. But it ſeems highly abſurd, that the whole Body of Laws of Nature, or the indiſpenſable Rules of Action to Mankind, ſhould reſt upon no other Foundation, but a few Inſtructions delivered to our Firſt Parents; and theſe tranſmitted thrō' all the Periods of Time, and all the Revolutions of States, and Kingdoms into all the Corners of the Earth, upon the voluntary Reports of thoſe that lived before us. As for the Caſe of the poor *Indians*, I'm abundantly ſatisfied, they are ſo little ſenſible of any Conveyance of this Nature, and ſuch inſuperable Obſtructions againſt the Succeſs, or Preſervation of it; that they might, on this account, juſtly plead invincible Ignorance to every Law of Nature, and conſequently free 'emſelves from that ſevere Sentence of *Periſhing without Law*, becauſe they really *Sinned* with-

without the least Apprehension, or *Conscience of a Law.* Thus far as to the Improbability of the Conveyance by Oral Tradition.

§. 2. I shall, in the second place, offer something, as to the Truth of the Position, that Laws of Nature take their Rise from Revelation.

And first, I think it manifestly contradicts the revealed *Canon.* And for this, I shall refer this Reverend Author to the Arguments I have advanced from Scripture, and particularly to the Passage he has cited, and my Explication pursuant to the whole Body of Commentators, and the best Modern Divines upon it. Indeed, he would make the World believe, he has taken off the Force of it, and established his own Notion by a parallel Text of Scripture: *And these Words, which I command thee this Day, shall be in thine Heart, and thou shalt Teach them diligently to thy Children,* &c. *Deut.* 6. v. 6, 7. Whereas, it's manifest, the holy Spirit speaks of Laws Revealed and Recorded, and the writing in the Heart implies nothing but a treasuring 'em up in the Mind, a Commitment of them to the Memory; and, in a Word, nothing but

but what the bleſſed Mother of our Lord did on another Occaſion, when ſhe *laid up his* heavenly *Sayings in her Heart.* It expreſſes a Duty incumbent upon us to commit the Laws of God to our Minds and Conſciences, to rivet 'em in our Hearts and Affections, ſo to Meditate upon them, that we may perform and keep them, and inſtruct others in them. But the Epiſtle to the *Romans* expreſſes a quite different thing. It expreſſes a Law diſtinct from a Revealed Law, and fixes the Diſtinction in the different manner of Promulgation, on the Tables of the Heart; ſo that if 'tis not done by native Inſcriptions, it muſt by natural Powers and Faculties. But further, the Canon of Scripture does not only pronounce this Notion falſe and groundleſs, but, I preſume, it has been in ſome meaſure demonſtrated to be ſo. For, if Man is originally endued with ſuch Faculties, as by a native Activity can exert 'emſelves in the Diſcovery of Laws of Nature, there can be no Foundation for erecting an uncertain Scheme of Oral Tradition.

§. 3. But to proceed to the Conſequences of this Poſition.

And

And first, It's very well known, the Patrons of this Notion directly overturn the received Distinctions of Natural, from Revealed Religon, and Natural from Positive Laws. The Distinction was always founded in the different Origin of these Laws. The latter being given by special Revelation, but the former discovered by the Workings of Natural Reason. But now both must derive from Revelation; and consequently there can be no other Distinction, but what may be among written Revealed Laws: in as much as one Revealed Law or Precept, in its Intrinsic Nature, may be better adapted to the View and Perception of Humane Understanding than others; or at least no other Distinction, but what lies between Oral, and Written Traditions.

But to conclude this Argument, This Notion seems to shake or overturn the eternal Distinctions of Moral Good and Evil, founded in the very Frame and Nature of Things, together with the OEconomy of Natural Conscience. For, it's manifest, it weakens the Authority of Natural Religion, by placing such important Laws and Precepts upon the slender Credit of Oral Traditions. Indeed there are so many Difficulties and Im-

Improbabilities in tranſmitting a Body of Laws, through all Parts of the Habitable World, by Oral Traditions, as are ſufficient to ruine the Credit of the Hypotheſis; and when this is done, the Latudinarian has the greateſt Advantage given him, to reſolve the Whole of Natural Religion into *Cuſtom* and *Education*: Theſe are Conſiderations ſo obvious and clear, as might have given an early Check to the Notion, unleſs more cogent Arguments and Authorities had diſcovered themſelves, than have been hitherto produced. However, now, I preſume, they may obtain their due Effect, and though they have been offered with a great deal of Freedom, yet I hope this will not obſtruct their Admiſſion, where they carry an Evidence ſufficient to make way for it.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Of the Diſtinction of Laws of Nature from Poſitive, or Written Laws, and whether they are Innate.

§. 1. I Proceed, in the next place, to fix the Diſtinction of Laws of Nature, from Poſitive, or Written Laws, and conſider whether they are Innate or no.

And firſt, The Diſtinction of Laws of Nature from Laws which, in the ſtricteſt Senſe, paſs under the Name of Revealed, is clearly viſible. For in Laws of Nature, as well the Subject-matter, as the Authority of the Law, or the Mind, and Intention of the Law-giver upon it, are diſcoverable by the Powers and Faculties of Natural Reaſon. Whereas, in Revealed Laws, (I mean ſuch as in the higheſt Senſe are ſtiled Revealed) both the Subject-matter, and Intention of the Law-giver, entirely depend on the expreſs Will and Pleaſure of God. If there's

there's any Difficulty then, it will consist in fixing the precise Distinction between them, and Human Laws. For its certain both are to be esteemed the Deductions and Decrees of Right Reason. But, I think, they are chiefly to be distinguished from the Subject-matter of them. It's indeed the Work of Natural Reason to discover, and fix the Subject-matter of these Laws; but the Subject-matter of Laws of Nature is often vastly different from that of Civil Laws; For the Subject-matter of Laws of Nature arising from the original Frame and Condition of our Natures, and for the most part immediately conducing to our very Beings or Subsistence, rather than Well-being or civil Happiness, it seems to carry a natural and intrinsic Goodness; and consequently an irresistible Force and Efficacy in it, abstracting from the Authority, or Injunctions of a Law-giver. But now the Subject-matter of Civil Laws being chiefly the Circumstantials, or Instruments of the improved Happiness, of particular Societies; and calculated for the particular Genius and Tempers of Men under different Climates, as well as the particular Turns and Periods of Kingdoms and Governments; it often car-

carries no Intrinsick Goodness in it, but is justly to be rank'd among Things indifferent; till the Pleasure and Authority of the Law-giver passes upon it. Again, the Subject-matter of Civil Laws, is extreamly variable; whereas that of Laws of Nature seems to be perpetual and unalterable. For since the Subject-matter of Laws of Nature results from the primitive Frame and Order of created Nature, or indeed, from the original Frame of Humane Nature, as it stands encompassed with common Wants and Necessities; it must necessarily be adapted to the whole Off-spring of Mankind, and consequently be as perpetual as universal. But now the Subject-matter of Humane Laws being only the Circumstantials of civil Happiness, advanced as a fit and proper Instrument to attain it in particular Communities and Societies of Men, it must needs be precarious and changeable; it's often calculated for particular Events and Emergencies, and consequently is as various as the different Aspects, or Revolutions of Kingdoms. It's an Instrument often advanced for a particular, and temporary End and Design, and it's well known there may be Twenty Instruments of equal force to attain it; and

conſequently the Subject-matter of Humane Laws is often no otherwiſe fix'd and determin'd, than by the arbitrary Decree or Sentence of the Law-giver. But further, in order to eſtabliſh a true Diſtinction of Laws of Nature from poſitive Humane Laws; let us conſider what it is that ſeems to give 'em the Denomination of Laws of Nature, and repreſents 'em as Innate Rules, or Principles.

And Firſt, ſince it is concluded, that they reſult, or take their riſe from the very Frame and Conſtitution of created Nature, (inſomuch, that God having eſtabliſhed the Frame and Order of Things, theſe Laws, without any poſitive Command, muſt follow upon it; and conſequently in one Act ſeems to have eſtabliſhed both) they may be juſtly eſteemed Laws of Nature. And this may be one principal Reaſon why they carry the appearance of Innate Principles, and in the ſacred *Canon* are repreſented to us as ſuch. In this Senſe, I'm ſure, they are ſufficiently diſtinguiſh'd from Humane Laws, ſince they are ſo far from taking their riſe in the Frame and Conſtitution of Nature, that they are, at beſt, but remote Deductions from Laws of Nature, or rather certain temporary Rules and Proviſions

visions of Reason advanced upon particular Emergencies in conformity to Laws of Nature, or, at least, an arbitrary enforcement of Laws of Nature by positive Rewards and Punishments. But further, that which in reality gives them the appearance of Innate Principles and the denomination of Laws of Nature, is the evidence and perspicuity of 'em. For since it is concluded, that Laws of Nature result from the very Frame and Order of Nature, from that state and condition of Things wherein we were born, and whereby we subsist; they must undoubtedly discover 'emselves to the Minds of Men, even tho' they were lodged in the most simple and unimproved State of Nature. For as long as we allow Mankind to be Thinking Reasoning Beings, the desire of Self-preservation will direct 'em to those Laws, without the observance of which they can hardly pretend to subsist, much less be happy. In a word, they are Laws of Nature, because they are Impressions that are stamped on the Mind, from the most importunate cravings and exigencies of Nature; and they carry the appearance of Innate Principles, because they are certainly some of the first Suggestions that accompany a Mind af-

ter its arrived to a State of Thinking, and left to conſult the Safety and Preſervation of the whole Man: I ſay they are certainly ſome of the firſt Suggeſtions that would naturally offer 'emſelves to the Minds of Men. For tho' Mankind is brought forth in Impotence, and their Mind cultivated by Education, as their Bodies are cheriſhed by Food and Raiment, till they arrive to a competent Strength and Vigor, and conſequently Names, and Words, and Ideas of the moſt trite Objects of Senſe are inſtilled by the Inſtructions of Nurſes and Parents, yet could we ſuppoſe Men turned out into the World in a State of Maturity, without the Bias of Education upon 'em, I do not queſtion but the very Frame and Condition of their Beings, together with the Deſire of Self-preſervation, would give 'em a ſpeedy View of thoſe Laws, which, for this Reaſon, are juſtly ſtiled Laws of Nature. Again, they are Laws of Nature; becauſe they immediately fall in with ſome peculiar Propenſions; wrought off with the original Frame and Conſtitution of our Natures. It's viſible there are certain Inſtincts, or Impulſes in Nature, which ſeem to exert 'emſelves upon particular Actions, that cannot well be

be resolved into the elaborate Workings of Reason, for they seem to have engaged the Passions by a kind of influential Impulse before the Action can well be scanned by any deliberate Reasonings; and certainly nothing strikes the Passions sooner, than those Actions that are prescrib'd by Laws of Nature. Thus the receipt of Benefits creates a speedy exultation; the cherishing of our own Off-spring leaves a vigorous Complacency, and the most grateful Applauses and Satisfactions. And truly these are Things that have discovered 'emselves so early, where Nature has not been new moulded by contrary Habits, or Education, that I do not question but they have given a Foundation to pronounce Laws of Nature, natural Instincts, or Innate Doctrines, or Principles. To conclude this Argument, Another distinguishing Characteristick of Laws of Nature from Civil Laws, arises from the exercise of Reason in the discovery of 'em. It's on all hands allowed, that Reason is the immediate Directory in Civil Laws, as well as Laws of Nature. But yet Reason acts in a very different manner. For the Foundation of Laws of Nature being the common exigencies, necessities, or condition of Man-

kind, as Men, or ſuch an Order of Beings; Reaſon can eaſily fix ſuch Rules as will extend to the whole Species, ſo as to carry a binding Authority over 'em. But the Foundation of Civil Laws being only ſome particular Emergencies to be conſidered with regard to ſome particular Circumſtances of Time, Place, Perſons and the like; Reaſon cannot determin any thing abſolutely, or fix a general Rule, or, indeed, declare what is fit and convenient in every Community; and conſequently Civil Laws can only be the Deductions of Reaſon in Civil Governours, with regard to the State and Condition of their People, or Government where they preſide.

CHAP.

Chap. VI.

Reflections on Mr. Lock's *Arguments against Innate Ideas, or Practical Principles; and the true Controversy determined.*

§. 1. Having thus assigned the principal Characteristicks of Laws of Nature, we may in a few Words determine, whether there be any practical Principles, which are truly Innate: But before I shall conclude any thing, I shall take liberty to make some few Returns to the Arguments of a late Author on this Subject. [*Mr.* Lock's *Essay concerning Human Understanding.*] And first, concerning Universal Consent. It's indisputably evident, that Universal Consent does not prove any Ideas, or practical Principles to be Innate. Because an Universal Consent may prevail, partly from that Self-evidence, that naturally results from particular Things, or Actions, when presented to the Minds of Men; and partly from the Frame and Condition of

Human Nature; whereby we are forcibly prompted to the diſquiſition of 'em. But yet we are not willing wholly to diſcard the Argument; becauſe tho' Univerſal Conſent may not prove the Doctrine of Innate Ideas; yet it's certainly a conſiderable Argument of a Law of Nature. And tho' the Author of this Eſſay has done all he could to ruine the Credit and Authority of it, yet I hope I have proved there is ſuch a thing as Univerſal Conſent, eſtabliſhed upon a very firm and clear Foundation. But further, the remaining Arguments of this Author are chiefly advanced againſt Innate Ideas, but they appear with equal force againſt Innate practical Principles. And therefore I ſhall remark a little on that which he ſeems to fix the greateſt weight on; and that is, a Neceſſity of Perception, even in a State of Infancy; *for to him it ſeems a Contradiction, or hardly intelligible, that Truths ſhould be imprinted on the Soul which it perceives or underſtands not.* Sect. 5. p. 5. See pag. 13. Sect. 27. But certainly he cannot mean a Neceſſity of actual Perception. For the Finite Nature of a Human Mind, will not in the ſame Inſtant ſuffer many Objects to be received under an actual View; and com-

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mon experience informs us, that a great many Impressions, or Ideas, are lodged in the Memory, without being revived it may be for a succession of Years. And truly I can see no reason, why native Inscriptions may not remain without being actually attended to, as well as written Laws, or acquir'd Ideas. It's well known, those that contend for Innate Ideas, or Principles, do not think they discover 'emselves without the Exercise of our natural Powers and Faculties; and some of those external Means and Instruments that are necessary to acquired Knowledge.

In a word, they always suppose a due Attention and Application of Mind, even to the Exercise of Reflection. And truly since acquired Impressions, that are laid up in the Memory, are scarce ever revived, but by an accidental Occurrence of some present Object; these native Inscriptions (if any such) may not be perceived till their respective Objects are presented to the Mind, to exert its Powers and Faculties upon. Something like this our Exercitations on written Laws seem to resemble, when we never apprehend the full Force and Purport of a Law, till some special Case or Instance offers itself to induce an Application.

And

And thus the want of Perception in Infants may be fairly accounted for; as well as from the infant Indiſpoſitions of the Animal part: For the Organs being (for ought we know) at firſt not ſo well fitted to convey the Images of outward Objects, and conſequently fix any Impreſſions, or eſtabliſh any clear Perceptions, no wonder if native Inſcriptions lie dormant. This Author allows, there's a time when a Human Soul begins to Think, or exerciſe any of its natural Powers and Faculties; and native Inſcriptions cannot occur, or be perceived before we begin to Think; yea, rather if they are to be revived by the Exerciſe of the Mind, upon outward Things or Objects that are peculiar to 'em; we can ſcarce expect 'em among our infant Thoughts, or mental Exercitations, as long as we are ſo conſtantly entertained by the Inventions of Nurſes and Parents. Thus far there ſeems to be no neceſſity for diſcarding innate Ideas or practical Principles; and conſequently, if it appears that the Doctrine ſerves any real Purpoſes of Religion, I ſee nothing advanced by this Author that demonſtrates the Abſurdity of it.

§. 2.

§. 2. But yet for all this, if it be allowed that Probabilities may determine our Judgments in this Matter, the Doctrine of Innate Ideas, is rather to be rejected than retain'd. It's abundantly concluded, That Man is under an estabilisht Method of attaining the right knowledge of Good and Evil; the Frame and Order of Things within and without, with the exercise of his own Faculties upon 'em, will present him with a Scheme of Moral Duty, and a true Measure of Action; and that too as clearly as if it was impressed on the Mind, with the first Lineaments of its Being: And therefore there seems to be no visible Necessity for having Recourse to Innate Ideas, or Inscriptions. And certainly, if Innate Ideas are serviceable to Mankind, they must be so in order to supply the Defects of Reason, and consequently, they seem to be exempt from the Disquisitions of Reason. For if Innate Ideas are to be examined and judged on by the Workings of Reason, Reason itself, (I mean the Decrees and Deductions of it,) will answer all the Ends and Designs of a reasonable Being as effectually, as if a Digest of Laws were originally recorded on the Mind.

Mind. If this be true, as I think it's, in ſome meaſure, demonſtrated to be, the Doctrine of Innate Principles muſt be laid aſide, ſince we cannot conceive that a wiſe Creator ſhould eſtabliſh any Ordinance, without ſome ſpecial Ends and Uſes annexed to it, I mean ſuch, as are not ſerved any other way. If it be ſaid, that Reaſon exerciſes no Juriſdiction in this Affair; then, I'm afraid, Innate Inſcriptions will rather endamage than advance Religion and Morality. For then every one will be apt to obtrude his own Fancies, and wild Suggeſtions, for native Inſcriptions; and conſequently, Mankind muſt be expoſed to all the Extravagancies of Enthuſiaſm, in the OEconomy of Nature, as well as that of Grace; ſo that whatſoever any one has the boldneſs to affirm, or fancy to be written on the Heart, muſt immediately paſs an Obligation on all Mens Actions; and the Finger of God ſhall be pleaded to the Subverſion of the common Principles of Morality, as the Spirit of God has been to the Subverſion of the Peace and Unity of the Church. When all things then are thus fairly laid together, we may with greater appearance of Reaſon, conclude, That our Ideas and Principles are acquired,

red, as well as the more remote Deductions of Science, and that 'tis their intimate Agreement with the Ends and Interests, or common Frame and Necessity of our Nature, that gives 'em the appearance of native Impressions. In a word, then, tho' the sacred Language seems to favour the Notion, yet it may be justly resolved into Metaphor, or Figure, and import no more than an Allusion to the general Custom of promulging Laws in Tables, or Writing. Inasmuch as God has originally endued us with Powers and Faculties to discover a Rule of Action, and Law to Govern ourselves by, in the common Exigences of Human Nature, as clearly as if he had Engraven it on Tables of Stone.

CHAP.

Chap. VII.

Of the different Degrees of the Evidence of Laws of Nature.

IT will eaſily be granted, that Laws of Nature carry a different Evidence, in proportion to the Subject-matter of 'em, and the ſeveral Workings of Reaſon, in the Diſquiſition of 'em. Some Laws diſcover 'emſelves by a ſingle Conſequence, or a ſhort train of Conſequences, whilſt others reſt upon an Evidence, that is wrought by ſeveral Gradations, or a large Series of Conſequences or Deductions. The primary Laws of Nature are thoſe which repreſent the principal Duties we owe to God, or thoſe which concern our own Perſons, or the Perſons of our Neighbours. For thoſe that ariſe from our own, or our Neighbours Property, are certainly more elaborate and remote. I ſhall illuſtrate theſe Obſervations by a ſingle Inſtance in each of 'em.

And firſt, To Reverence and Worſhip the Supreme Being, which we call God, is certainly a Fundamental Law of Nature;

ture; becauſe it neceſſarily ariſes from that Relation we bear to God. For the moſt obvious Notion of a God, and a bare Aſſent to this ſingle Propoſition, that God is our Creator, and we his Creatures, from whom all that we have, or belongs to us, is immediately derived, muſt by a direct and immediate Conſequence demonſtrate, that we are obliged to empty our Souls before him in the moſt ſolemn Acts of Homage and Reverence. Indeed, as for the manner of Divine Worſhip, tho' Natural Reaſon, by a train of Arguments, might determine it, ſo as to be ſome way acceptable to God; yet to eſtabliſh it in Perfection, is certainly the buſineſs of Revealed Religion: But that God is to be Worſhipped, is a Duty lodged in the moſt ſimple Workings of Reaſon. Again, That God has enjoyned Temperance, as a Duty, ariſes not only from the prime and moſt obvious Ends of our Being, but from the Doctrine of Self-preſervation, and the neceſſary Methods of Subſiſtence; ſo that allowing the clear Dictates of Reaſon, in the Mind of our great Creator, to be a Rule of Duty, a ſingle Inference will demonſtrate Temperance to be a Duty. Again, as to thoſe Laws which concern the Perſon

Perſon of our Neighbours; ſuch I mean as prohibit Murder, or other Violations of their Perſons, it's viſible, the Conſideration of the Methods of our Subſiſtence, whereby we are neceſſitated to rely on the Succours of our Fellow-creatures, will inſtruct us that God did not allow us to aſſaſſinate and deſtroy 'em; the very Suggeſtions of Self-preſervation will oblige us to make the Concluſion. Again, the Conſideration of being Fellow-creatures, and a peculiar of a Sovereign Creator, and as ſuch under his immediate Conduct and Diſpoſal, will inſtruct us, that we have no right to their Lives, without a ſpecial Commiſſion from him.

Laſtly, The early Diſcoveries which we find in ourſelves, of Love, Tenderneſs, and Compaſſion, and the Earnings which are implanted towards our own Fleſh and Blood, will direct us that God intended we ſhould place a certain Meaſure of theſe native Paſſions and Propenſions on thoſe that are deſcended from us, or are compounded of the ſame Ingredients, and formed in the ſame Mould; and conſequently he could never authorize us to commit Violence or Cruelties on their Perſons; ſo abſurd is the Hypotheſis of the *Leviathan*, that projects a State of Nature

ture to be an absolute State of War. But to proceed to the last Instance, that of outward Goods and Possessions, which engages the principal Laws and Measures of Justice. Thus to Steal, is, no doubt, a Violation of natural Justice, and consequently a Violation of a Law of Nature; but yet this rests on the Force and Authority of a Law antecedent to it, I mean that of Property; and consequently it implies several Conclusions or Deductions, before we discover the Authority or Obligation of it. Thus to detain or invade a Neighbour's Property, contrary to Compact, is certainly an Act of Violence done to a Law of Nature; but yet it demands a Proof of the Obligations of Compact or voluntary Promises, as well as of the Authority of Property, before the Law can be decyphered. It cannot be denyed but these are Laws of Nature, because natural Reason, by close Researches and regular Conclusions, may discover their Obligations. I'm sure it can be no Objection, that they result from voluntary Intercourses and Transactions among Mankind, I mean Compacts or Bargains; for the Necessities of Nature, dictating such Transactions, is a sufficient Indication of their Divine

Authority and Obligation; and conſequently, whatever immediately Reſults from 'em, muſt obtain the ſame Authority and Obligation, as well as Character: But yet, it's manifeſt, when Laws of Nature are to be ſupported by a Train of Conſequences, the Evidence is not ſo direct and convincing; becauſe in theſe Caſes the Mind is more fatally expoſed to Miſcarriages. Upon the whole then it appears, that Laws of Nature reſt upon very different Degrees of Evidence. And now thus much being agreed and concluded, it may by theſe Meaſures be more exactly diſcerned which are to be eſteemed Laws of Nature, and which not ſo; which Fundamental, or *de primo Dictamine Naturæ*, and which not ſo; and conſequently, the Neceſſity of forming a compleat Scheme of Laws of Nature, ſeems to be wholly ſuperſeeded.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the Foundation of God's Right of Dominion, and our Duty of Allegiance as a Law-giver.

§. 1. HAving asserted the Authority of Laws of Nature, by fixing it in the Author of Nature, it naturally directs me to enquire into the Original and Foundation of those Obligations we owe to God, or how we are obliged to the Observance of his Laws. But before I proceed to a direct Determination of this Matter, I shall make some Returns to what I find in a late excellent Discourse, concerning the Power and Right of Obliging, and particularly as applied to God. He labours to prove that the Right and Power of Obliging is the same, especially with respect to God; and therefore after a great many Arguments concludes, *From all which it follows that whereever there is a Right of Obliging, and where there is an absolute uncontroulable Power of Obliging, there is for that very*

ry reaſon a Right alſo, [See *The Certainty and Neceſſity of Religion in general,* Page 100.] Whether theſe Aſſertions are true or no will appear by and by.

Firſt, I cannot but Premiſe, that Right and Power happening to accompany each other in the Exerciſe of 'em, no more than Heat and Light in the Sun, is no Argument that they are not two diſtinct things, conceived under two diſtinct Ideas or Notions.

Secondly, Tho' a Right and Power of Obliging, are both eternally inveſted in God, yet it's no more an Argument that they imply the ſame thing, than that the Attributes of Infinite Power and Juſtice are the ſame. Nay, further, tho' a Right of Obliging may by a Train of Conſequences follow from a Power of Obliging, or on the contrary, a Power of Obliging from a Right of Obliging; yet it's no more an Argument of their Identity, than that a rational Soul and Thought are the ſame, becauſe a rational Soul implies a Power of Thinking. And, therefore, tho' an abſolute uncontroulable Power may infer a Right of Obliging, ſo that for that very Reaſon there may be a Right of Obliging, yet they may be as diſtinct as Power and Truth.

Truth. But to consider both in their received and established Ideas or Notions. Now certainly, were we to appeal not only to the best Moralists, but to the common Sense of Mankind, they would unanimously concur in two different Descriptions. And I'm perswaded they differ as much as a Raparee or Tyrant, from a lawful Prince; as much as doing a thing Rightfully, or upon a just Authority, and doing a thing by Violence. For Violence argues a Power of Punishing, as well as a rightful Execution of Punishment; both indeed attain the same end, that is, engage an Obedience, but upon different Measures and Principles. A Power of Obliging, in the strict Notion of it, is only concerned for securing an Obedience, without considering the Justice or Injustice of the Action; but a Right of Obliging implies an Obedience established on a just Authority or Foundation; if there be any such thing as Justice distinct from Power.

In a word, A Right of Obliging implies the Title of a Superior to Obedience, and consequently, a Title to enforce it by suitable Rewards and Punishments; but a Power of Obliging neither implies a Title to the one nor other;

Thus an Uſurper may have as abſolute a Command of Rewards and Puniſhments, to oblige or ſecure an Obedience, as the moſt rightful Sovereign; yet he certainly wants an Authority to enforce an Obedience, by the Weight and Terror of Puniſhment; and if he doth enforce it, he exerciſes Power, but not Right.

Again, A rightful Sovereign may retain a Title to an Obedience, and to the Exerciſe of Rewards and Puniſhments to enforce it, but he may want a Power to exert his Right, as in the Caſe of Rebellion or general Defection. The Notion is clear and indiſputable, when applied to the civil Power on Earth, and it carries the ſame Evidence and Force in it, when applied to the abſolute independent Power of Heaven: For tho' Power and Right, by reaſon of the infinite Perfections of the Divine Nature, are Inſeparable in God, and in Man not ſo; yet the Ideas, or Notions of Right and Power, whether in God or Men, are formed upon the ſame Meaſures and Principles; yea, as much as the Notions of Juſtice, Reaſon, or Purity, allowing Infinity and Perfection in God, which cannot be given to Men.

§. 2.

§. 2. Having thus far asserted the Distinction of *a Right of Obliging from a Power of Obliging*, I shall proceed a little further, and consider whether the Right of Obliging, as a true and proper Law-giver, consists in nothing else but in a Power of contributing to our Happiness or Misery, by special Rewards or Punishments. Thus much seems to be asserted in the Discourse already cited; for we are told, That *no one has a Right or Power of Obliging another to act such a particular Way he prescribes, any further than he has a Power of contributing to the Happiness or Misery of that Being he so Prescribes to,* —— *and that God can no otherwise induce an Obligation upon Men to Obey him, than by making 'em know that he has it in his Power, to render them Happy or Miserable,* Page 95.

But certainly, that a Right of Obliging, as a Law-giver, does not consist in a Power of Rewarding and Punishing, is evident from uncontroulable Arguments.

As first, It cannot be denied but an Equal, that can challenge no Right of Dominion over us, may, upon some special Circumstances, be invested with such a Power of Rewarding and Punishing, as

to engage us to Purſue and Imbrace what he dictates to us; and yet ſuch a Power does not give him any Right of Dominion over us, or induce an Obligation of obeying him as a proper Superiour. A Friend may propoſe Rewards to determine us to any particular Way in Matters of Counſel or Intereſt, and yet not induce a binding Authority upon us, like that of a Law. A Friend or Neighbour may, by Rewards or Favours, be empowered to contribute ſo highly to our Happineſs, as to induce not only Obligations of Gratitude, but the Exerciſe of other ſocial Vertues, and yet they do not eſtabliſh a Right of Sovereign Authority upon us.

In a word, A Robber, Uſurper, Aſſaſſin, or the Devil himſelf may have it in his Power to inflict ſuch Puniſhments as will determine any Man to Act as he preſcribes, and yet this Power gives no Right or Title to our Obedience, no more than a Right to inflict thoſe Puniſhments that will enforce it. It will eaſily be granted, that a Power of Puniſhing or Rewarding, and conſequently of contributing to our Happineſs or Miſery, are the only proper Motives of a rational Obedience, but I cannot conceive how

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they can be the Ground of Obedience that is due to a Superior. For nothing can be the Ground of Obedience, but such a Dependence as entitles a Being to impose things upon us by way of Precept or Command, and authorises him to inflict Punishments when his Commands are not fulfilled or executed, so that the Ground or Obligation of Obedience, due to Laws, is antecedent to a Power of Rewarding or Punishing; since it must not give Right to a Power of imposing Precepts or Commands; but to a Power of inflicting Punishments. Indeed the Miscarriages of this Notion, seem to arise by not distinguishing the Ground of Obedience, from its proper Motives. I will easily grant, that few would be perswaded to yield an Obedience to Commands, that are disagreeable to any thing about 'em, were there no Power of contributing to their Happiness or Misery, by Rewards or Punishments; and therefore nothing can more effectually engage an actual Obedience, with the Dissolute and Irreligious, than a Power of contributing to their Happiness or Misery, by Rewards or Punishments; but I cannot think that a bare Power of dispensing Rewards or Punishments, can represent the

the Right of Obedience, or in the Language of this Author, *the Right of Obliging another*; no more than the Right of Diſpenſing thoſe Rewards or Puniſhments we have in our Power. This is an Aſſertion that carries ſo much Evidence in it, that it holds every way: For were any Subject placed in ſuch Circumſtances, that neither Rewards nor Puniſhments were left to oblige him to yield an Obedience, yet he may for all this, acknowledge his Superior's Right to his Obedience. Thus in the Caſe of a general Defection, tho' the Rightful Sovereign is diveſted of a Power of Rewarding and Puniſhing, the Rebels enjoying an abſolute Poſſeſſion of both; yet their Ambition, Revenge, or Succeſs may not carry 'em to ſuch a pitch of Inſolence, but they may ſtill be forced ſecretly to own their Sovereign's Right to their Allegiance, as well as Right to that Power of diſpenſing Rewards and Puniſhments, which they have wreſted from him, and particularly a Right of Puniſhment due to their unnatural Defection.

Again, I queſtion not but the very Devils in Hell, tho' they know and feel the irreverſible Sentence paſſed againſt 'em, and conſequently have no Motive left

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to ingage their Obedience, are forced to recognize their Fealty, or acknowledge God's Right of Dominion over them, in obliging 'em to serve and obey him; and his Right in passing that very Sentence they actually suffer for not obeying him. For in this Sense they certainly *believe and tremble*, insomuch that their very Belief seems to be an Instrument to enhance their Misery.

To conclude this Argument, I can freely grant, that there cannot be a Right of Obliging without a Right of Rewarding or Punishing, because (as has already been observed) the Right of Rewarding or Punishing is founded in a Right of Obliging; but there may be a Power of Rewarding and Punishing, without a Right of Rewarding, much less of Obliging. In one word, the recognising a Right of Obliging, or a Title to Obedience, is only an Assent of the Mind to a particular Truth; and tho' the Power of Rewarding or Punishing are the only proper Arguments to secure an Obedience, yet I hope there may be other Reasons or Arguments to engage this Assent besides the Power of Rewarding or Punishing, or of contributing to our Happiness.

§. 3.

§. 3. Having thus offered my Reasons why I Dissent from this Author, before I determine wherein the Right of Obliging consists, I shall offer something against Mr. *Hobbs*'s Notion. He, indeed, carries the thing somwhat higher, for he peremptorily affirms, That the Right of God's Sovereign Authority over Mankind, rests merely upon his irresistible Power; *a sola potentia irresistibili*, De Cive, *cap.* 14, 15. And to confirm the Notion, he further affirms, That one Man might have challenged a Right over the whole Offspring of Mankind, had he been endued with a Sufficiency of Power to have resisted the united Force of his Fellow-Creatures, or, at least, protected them and himself. *Manssisset igitur ipsi jus dominii in cæteros omnes propter potentiæ* excessum *qua & se & illos conservare potuisset.* Pursuant to this, he tells us §. 7. That our Obligations of Obedience are founded in our native Impotence and Fear, *a metu sive Imbecillitatis propriæ (respectu Divinæ potentiæ) conscientia.* I must confess, there seems to be a near Affinity between this and the Notion already excepted against, tho' this seems to be carried much further, and more palpably beyond the Mark.

Mark. For that admits a Power of Rewarding, as well as Puniſhing, and conſequently includes an Obedience mixed with Love as well as Fear; but this fixes all upon the Power of Puniſhing, and conſequently places all upon Fear, or ſome Glympſes of Hope, without any foundation for Love. Indeed this is a Notion which deſerves rather Contempt and Scorn than a formal Reply. For it levels us with the unthinking Brutes that periſh, by making Fear, and that too the moſt ſervile part of it, a fear of Puniſhment, the only Spring of Human Actions. This, we ſee, is the Sovereign Principle of his Religion, as well as Politicks, but it has been more than once learnedly confuted, as concerned in the latter; and it's ſo abſur'd as applyed to the former, that it ſcarce deſerves the leaſt Notice, much leſs a Confutation. I ſhall therefore diſmiſs this Notion with a few Obſervations.

Firſt, It's obſervable, that the Arguments brought to ſupport it, are directed to prove the proper Motive of our Obedience; not God's Right and Sovereignty to it; or, in other terms, to enforce an Obedience, not to repreſent the Right or Duty of Obedience.

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Secondly, It is obſervable, that Arguments ſuggeſted againſt the laſt Notion, muſt carry an equal Force againſt this. But, in a word, I think no conſidering Perſon can diſcern any Conſequence between a bare Power of puniſhing a Sett of Men, and a Right of impoſing Laws and demanding Obedience to 'em; and if 'tis falſe in a finite Power, it muſt be ſo in infinite; for there is no difference beſides original and delegated, infinite and limited, neither of which alter the nature of Things, Notions or Conſequences; ſo that infinite Power in puniſhing as ſuch, or, as it barely implies, an infinite Power or Ability to puniſh, no more gives the Idea or Denomination of a Right of puniſhing (much leſs a Right of impoſing Laws) than a finite delegated Power doth.

§. 4. It remains, that I endeavour to repreſent, wherein the preciſe Nature of a rightful Dominion, Obligation, or Obedience, with reſpect to God and his Laws, conſiſts. And I ſhall enlarge ſomething more freely upon it, becauſe all delegated Right of Dominion and Obedience entirely depends upon it. Thus if we ſuppoſe civil Government founded in Compact,

pact, the Right of Dominion and Obedience muſt reſt upon the Authority of Compacts, as 'tis a Law of Nature, and an indiſpenſable Duty to Obſerve and keep 'em; but the obſervance of 'em cannot be an indiſpenſable Duty, but by ſome Right and Authority, lodged in the Author of Nature, that pronounces 'em ſuch. Thus if civil Government takes its Riſe from a Paternal Right, Conqueſt, Immemorial Preſcription, or Poſſeſſion, the Right of Dominion or Obedience inveſted in the civil Power, muſt reſt on the Authority of ſome Divine Law, either natural or revealed, ratifying or confirming their Claims or Titles; and the Authority of this Law muſt reſt on ſome Right which God challenges to impoſe ſuch a Law; ſo that the Authority of every ſort of rightful earthly Power is founded in a Divine Right, in vertue of which, it is ſtiled *the Ordinance of God*; ſince all their Right of Dominion, or Authority, derives from a Supereminent Right in God. Now this is an abſolute Demonſtration of the Abſurdity of the *Hobbiſts* Notion, that Matters of Religion receive their Obligation from the State or civil Power, and conſequently induce an abſolute Obedience: This puts an eternal

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Silence to the Diſpute, Whether we are to yield an Obedience to the Laws of the State before the Laws of God, or whether the Laws of the State are to be obeyed againſt the Laws of God? For certainly, ſince God is the Fountain of all Power and Authority, the Duties of Religion are ultimately determined by God, as well as receive their Obligation from God; ſo that the civil Power, that derives all Authority from God, can only exert a Power in matters of Religion, where God has not interpoſed, or placed it in other hands; but it's the greateſt Abſurdity in Nature to pretend a ſupereminent Power to that of God, when the whole any Man can pretend to immediately derives from God.

But to return: Firſt then, the true Original of God's Right of Dominion, or Right of Obliging us, undoubtedly reſults from his creative and preſerving Power. That that Being, which by an abſolute independent Power gives Being to another, has a Right to give Laws, or fix the Meaſures and Rules of his Being, ſeems to be a Maxim that carries a kind of Self-evidence in it; I'm ſure it's the very Argument advanced in the Sacred *Canon*, *Rom.* 9. 20, 21. *Nay, but O Man, who art*

art thou that repliest against God? shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the Potter power over the Clay, of the same lump to make one Vessel unto Honor, and another unto Dishonor? It's well known, the Design of the Argument is to represent a supereminent Right in God, even such as might justly authorise him to assign those Allotments to Mankind, which his infinite Goodness would never suffer him to execute, and consequently it must demonstrate a Right of giving Laws to those Creatures to whom he gave a Being. But to pursue the Argument upon the Reasons of it, It's on all Hands allowed, that a Right of Dominion is founded in Property, and the more absolute the Property is, the more unquestionable is the Right of Dominion. That Property is the Foundation of Obedience, or a Right of Obliging, both in respect of God and Men, this Author freely owns in another place, *pag.* 126. And yet he labours to wave it in the place before us, as will appear more fully by and by. His Concessions are these, *All the Reasons and Grounds of our Obedience to Men, and of their Right of Obliging us, are Power, Goodness and Property—— But God has all these*

Titles to our Obedience in the higheſt degree poſſible, for by giving us our entire Being, and every thing that belongs to our Nature, 'tis plain, that he has a greater Property in us by this Act of Creation or Production, than can accrue to any Man by Conqueſt, Purchaſe, Covenant, or any other way whereby Men come to have a Propriety in one another. I think the Argument is carried ſo full and clear, that it ſeems not capable of an Improvement. It's certain there is no Property ſo abſolute as that which reſults from a creative preſerving Power. For Creation makes the Property abſolute, independent and unborrowed; every Spring and Movement, every Power or Faculty, every Intereſt or Happineſs, either actually poſſeſs'd, or capable of being enjoy'd, is an abſolute Property of a Creator; for all that is within or without us when he firſt ſet us forth into the World, was originally wrapped up, and in time iſſued forth of his infinite Power and Wiſdom; the whole Stock of Materials came out from him, and when 'tis all returned back, he has *but his own.* And *is it not lawful to do what one will with his own?* Subordinate Proprietors indeed may be limited, as to the exerciſe, or uſe of what they have a Propriety in, but

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an abſolute independent Proprietor is to account to no one. We may therefore, in the Language of our Saviour, expoſtulate, *who ſhall give unto him that which is* thus *his own?* Luke 16. 12. Again, a preſerving Power, eſpecially ſuch as is peculiar to God, ſeems to advance, or at leaſt corroborate the Propriety he challenges in us. As our Beings took their riſe from another, and were formed by the Hands of an Almighty Creator, we are by a neceſſity of Nature, or the original Frame and Condition of our Nature, Beings perpetually dependent, ſo that Reaſon, as well as Revelation, inſtructs us, that *in him we live, move, and have our Beings.* He did not form and beſpeak us into Being, and after the finiſhing Stroke, put us wholly out of his Hands with an intrinſick Power of Self-ſubſiſtence; but the ſame Power concurs to continue our Beings, that was required to form us into Being, for every Breath of Life, even our very Soul, and that Reaſon which ſeems to give us Authority to act for ourſelves, nay, the whole Cargo of Happineſs, and every Span and Minute of it, perpetually hangs on the preſerving Power of a mighty Creator. So that we may Expoſtulate in the Lan-

guage of an Apoſtle, *What haſt thou that thou didſt not receive?* 1 Cor. 4. 7. Eſpecially ſince we have received nothing but what carries appearance of having not received it, in as much as it ſtill reſts on the preſerving Power of the Donor. Now what can eſtabliſh a Right of Dominion, or a Right of Obliging, if a Property ſo abſolute, ſo independent, ſo inſeparable, and ſo peculiar as this will not do it? Not only the uncontroverted Notions of Mankind, but the firſt Workings of Reaſon will ſubſcribe to it. Can Reaſon diſown that Right by which it moves, and acts, and ſubſiſts? Nay, to advance a little further, this Gentleman, in another place, ingenuouſly confeſſes, that there are certain natural Propenſions or Diſpoſitions in the Soul, that cloſe in with particular Actions, before Reaſon can well exert it ſelf, *p.* 122. And certainly the preſent Notion of a Right of Dominion, founded in a creative, preſerving Power, will be immediately embraced by the ſame original Propenſions; for I'm perſwaded, could the Mind feel the Idea of ſuch a Power upon her in an Inſtant, there would ſuch an inward Impulſe, like a natural Inſtinct, ariſe, that muſt diſcover a tacit *tremendous* kind of Aſſent to a Right

Right of Fealty and Allegiance, before Reaſon could draw forth into a ſhread of Arguments to induce it. Indeed, the Title to a Right of Dominion is ſo indiſputable, that Reaſon cannot ſuggeſt any thing that can pretend to limit the exerciſe of it, beſides God's own immenſe and unchangable Attributes and Perfections. And therefore, tho' I will not diſpute the Power of God, whether he could give his Creatures ſuch Laws as muſt make 'em eternally miſerable, (for did his Power extend thus far, his infinite Wiſdom, Purity and Goodneſs, muſt ſuſpend the exerciſe of it) otherwiſe if theſe could admit of it, I can ſee nothing that we can have recourſe to, either as our own, or from others, that could give Right or Foundation to diſpute the Authority of 'em. The Nature and Tendency of 'em, might very well obſtruct the Obſervance of 'em; but ſtill there would be no real Foundation, excluſive of the Goodneſs and Purity of God, to cancel the Authority of 'em. However theſe may be Niceties, and therefore it's by no means material to adjuſt or ſettle 'em. It's abundantly ſufficient, that a creative, preſerving Power, is an ample Foundation to eſtabliſh a Right of Do-

minion and Obligations of Obedience, with reſpect to thoſe Laws which God at any time has enjoyned us, or his infinite Purity, Goodneſs, or Wiſdom ſhall ſuffer him to enjoyn us. For as long as his bleſſed Attributes and Perfections regulate the divine Decrees, there can be no Laws impoſed, but what directly tend to the Happineſs and welfare of his Creatures.

§. 5. But further, we may conſider the creative Power of God, as in reality it is, an incomparable Bleſſing or Benefit. For we cannot imagin, but an act of Creation was an effect of infinite Wiſdom and Goodneſs as well as Power. I'm ſure the diſtinguiſhing Marks of Favour God has placed on Man, beyond the other parts of the Creation, in ſtamping him with his own Image, and framing him for a Life and Action like himſelf, abundantly demonſtrate that infinite Goodneſs, conſpired with infinite Power, in his firſt Production. It cannot then be denied, but a Fund of Benefits was raiſed in the firſt Principles of his Being: And certainly the firſt Notices of Reaſon inſtruct us, that Benefits imply an Obligation to Duty, and a Right in the Benefactor

nefactor to challenge it; and therefore unleſs God, after he had given us a Being, had done any thing to cancel that Intereſt which the Bleſſings of our Creation gave him in us, he has a Right to our Obedience, without the addition of new Favours or Rewards; and conſequently a Power of contributing further to our Happineſs, by diſpenſing freſh Rewards, cannot be required to eſtabliſh a Right of Obliging. But I muſt freely confeſs, that the receipt of Benefits only induces an Obligation to make ſuitable Returns for what is received; when this is done, the Obligation ceaſes, and conſequently it cannot infer ſuch general Obligations of Obedience as are implied in a legiſlative Power, or a Power of impoſing Laws. It's true, where there is a continued Succeſſion of Benefits, and where the very Laws 'emſelves bring in new Benefits, it muſt needs perpetuate our Obligations, and render 'em as univerſal as thoſe that ariſe from a legiſlative Power. And this being the true Caſe between God and us, I mean in reſpect of his Laws, a Right of Duty and Obedience may be founded in that Fund of Benefits he has heaped on us. But yet this is a further Demonſtration, that the

true and fundamental Right of Dominion and Obedience flows from God's creative Power, whereby he hath made us, and not we ourſelves. And that this Argument of Benefits, and all others, concenter with, if not derive from it. In a word, this eſtabliſheth ſuch an unqueſtionable Right of Dominion and Obedience, that were there no other to ſupport it, it's alone ſufficient to give the great Creator of the World a Right to Govern Mankind by Laws, and enforce the Obſervance of 'em by ſuitable Rewards and Puniſhments.

℣. 6. It now remains, that I conſider what is ſaid by this Author, in Oppoſition to God's Right of Sovereignty from his creative Power: His Words are theſe, *It is not his great and ſupereminent Power in creating Men, and giving them Being, which is ſolely in itſelf the Ground and Foundation of his Title to their Obedience.* His Argument is, —— *For was Miſery the certain unalterable Condition of their Being without End or Decreaſe, how could the Author of their Being be imagined to oblige 'em to obey his Commands?* Now before I give a direct Anſwer, I cannot but remark that it ſeems to be diſingenuous or unfair

unfair to argue upon important Matters, by Suppositions that contradict the thing in Fact, that never were in Fact, and that involve a Complication of Absurdities that they ever should be so; such I take to be the Creation of Man to an unalterable State of Misery without a Possibility of an End or Decrease; for this Way of arguing often serves to confound rather than illustrate or discover Truth. But 2*dly*, An Instance ought to have been assigned against the binding Authority of a creative Power, that implies a Power in God of contributing to our Happiness or Misery; otherwise it concludes nothing against a creative Power as 'tis now established, no more than it advances his own Hypothesis. But if Man is created to an infinite and irreversible State of Misery, then God has no longer a Power in this Case of contributing to his Happiness or Misery, and consequently can be no Argument against a Right of Dominion founded in a creative Power, that admits of infinite Rewards as well as Punishments. 3*dly*, The Instance given, seems to discard Man from being the proper Subject of a Law: For 'tis in vain to give Laws to a Being that is irreversible and infinitely happy or miserable, since

ſince Laws in this Caſe can turn to no manner of End or Improvement; we may as well ſuppoſe a Man infinitely, and irreverſibly happy, and this implies infinite Perfection, I mean as much as a finite Nature is capable of, and then God will not only be diſabled from adding to his Happineſs by new Rewards, but new Laws. 4*thly*. The Force of this Inſtance only extends to determine the Motives, not the Right of Obedience; or, in a word, what will engage us actually to obey, not wherein the Right or Duty of Obedience is fixed; and therefore tho' Rewards and Puniſhments are the true and proper Motives to ſecure a rational Obedience, yet the Right of Obedience may reſt upon a diſtinct Foundation. Now I have a Preſident before me, I may at leaſt with leave of this Author ſuppoſe ſomething out of the Way as well as he, to prove the truth of the Aſſertion; ſuppoſe a Man created to infinite and irreverſible Happineſs, though God has no longer a Power of contributing or adding to his Happineſs, yet I hope this Author in this Caſe will not deny God's Right of Sovereignty, and Dominion over him, as his Creature. In one word, I have proved, That the

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Devils in Hell are or will be in a State of irreversible and infinite Misery, and though for this Reason they can be acted with no Inclinations of Obedience, yet they must still believe, or acknowledge the Sovereignty of their Creator, and tremble.

I presume I have now in some Measure fixed the Foundation of God's Sovereignty and Dominion over us; and tho' I have used some Liberty in rejecting the Opinions of others, yet I hope I may fairly account for it. For the Notions I have contended for, are founded on things, that fall in with the established Sentiments of Mankind; such as are properly founded in a creative preserving Power, and consequently they must command a Submission, and Obedience upon the clearest Convictions of Reason; and as long as the Arguments suggested are cogent and satisfactory, it is not Prudence to leave the common Road, and put things of Moment and Importance upon an Issue that it may be wants Evidence; or at least contradicts some received Truths or Notions. But now an Enquiry of this Nature has been made, I cannot dismiss the Argument without adoring our Great and Good God, Creator

tor and Sovereign, *For who is like unto the Lord our God, who dwelleth on High, and yet humbleth Himself to behold the things that are in Heaven and in the Earth*, Pſalm 113. *ver.* 5, 6. Tho' God is inveſted with ſuch an abſolute Sovereignty over the Sons of Men, yet he has graciouſly condeſcended to conſider their Infirmities, Wants and Neceſſities. It's already concluded, that the Laws he originally gave to Mankind are adapted to the great Ends and Intereſts of our Nature; they are not only contrived to preſerve its Frame from Violence and Ruin, but to advance and ſecure that Happineſs its capable of receiving: They are contrived not ſo much to repreſent the Authority of an abſolute Creator, as to eſtabliſh the Happineſs of his Creatures; whatever Right of Dominion God may challenge to impoſe thoſe Laws he has given us, it's manifeſt they carry their own Arguments of Obedience along with 'em. He has not bound us with the Cords of Fear, but Love; indeed they have the higheſt Overtures of Love to recommend 'em; Love not only for the exceeding Recompence of Reward that is annexed to the obſervance of 'em, but Love that is contained in the very

Frame

Frame of 'em, even Love as dear and valuable to us, as the Love of Ourselves, and our own Happiness, since they are the direct and immediate Instruments of Happiness; so that were God destitute of a Right of imposing Laws, or even a Power of contributing further to our Happiness by fresh Rewards, the Nature and Tendency of those Laws he has actually imposed (if not obstructed by very debauched Propensions,) is sufficient to secure an Obedience to him.

CHAP.

Chap. IX.

Of the Certainty of Rewards and Puniſhments under a State of Nature.

§. 1. INdeed I have already touched upon this Argument, in the Diſquiſition of a Law of Nature; but in order to the eſtabliſhing a Scheme of Natural Religion, I think myſelf obliged to enlarge a little further upon it. And firſt, I ſhall not Appeal to the Argument of Natural Conſcience, warranted by Revelation itſelf; in as much as it contains an Abſolving or Condemning Faculty in it, and conſequently muſt be acted with a Senſe of Rewards and Puniſhments, the immediate Spring or Appendage of ſuch Powers or Faculties. This will be conſidered on another Subject. To proceed then, It's already concluded, That the Dictates of Natural Reaſon are true and proper Laws eſtabliſhed in a rightful and competent Authority; that is, in one word, they are

are the Commands of a Sovereign Power and Authority over the whole Off-ſpring of Mankind. And 'tis already concluded, that Rewards and Puniſhments (I mean ſuch as are lodged in the Hands of the Legiſlator, not the natural Effects of the Action, ariſing from the Obſervation or Violation of the Law) are, at leaſt, the neceſſary Appendages or Concomitants of a Law. I will not run into the nice and tedious Diſputes of the Schools, and examine whether Rewards and Puniſhments are ſo much of the Nature or Eſſence of a Law, that it loſes the denomination of a Law without them: This muſt be allowed by thoſe, that place the Obligation of a Law purely in a Power of Rewarding or Puniſhing. But this has been diſputed already, and therefore I'm inclined to the Negative. But however it cannot be denied, but Rewards are an inſeparable Property of a Law, adding Perfection to it, and a Prerogative peculiar to every Legiſlator. For certainly no one can be a rightful Legiſlator, without a Right to deſpenſe Rewards and Puniſhments: They declare and ſignifie a binding Authority, and no one can paſs for a rightful Legiſlator, without a Right to oblige or require Obedience.

dience. Herein a Law distinguishes it self from Counsel or Exhortation. Again, they contribute to the Perfection of a Law, since the Ends and Intentions of it cannot be secured without 'em.

This is absolutely necessary, where the Persons that yield an Obedience, are acted by contrary Dispositions and Propensions; and consequently they may justly be esteemed inseparable Properties of a Law. I will not dispute the Power or Prerogative of Heaven, whether God could not rightfully enjoyn a Law without annexing suitable Rewards and Punishments; but whosoever compares the Laws he has enjoyned with the Propensions of Human Nature, will be apt to impeach his infinite Wisdom for not annexing suitable Rewards as well as Punishments, since without 'em it's morally impossible to enforce the Observance of such Laws. Indeed Rewards and Punishments are so much a Property of a Law, that God thought fit to usher the first positive Law he gave to Mankind into the World, by annexing 'em to it; *In the Day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die*, Gen. 2. 17. As if he intended to imprint a Sense of Rewards and Punishments in the Original Idea

Idea of a Law. In a word, they are ſo much the Property of a Law, that wherever there is the Face of Government, and Laws enacted, Rewards and Puniſhments are eſteemed the unqueſtionable Prerogatives of the legiſlative Power. The whole Off-ſpring of Mankind that were ever under the Conduct of a Law, are acted with ſuch a deep Senſe of 'em, that a Right of Puniſhment is never diſputed, tho' the Penalty is not expreſly annexed. Thus far then at leaſt we are advanced; unleſs we can deny a Sovereign Creator a Right of exerciſing a legiſlative Power, we muſt allow him a Right of executing Puniſhments upon the Violation of his Laws, as well as a Power of rewarding the Obſervance of them.

§. 2. But now the Certainty of Divine Puniſhments, as well as Rewards, purſuing all his Laws, even Laws of Nature, is evinced from indiſputable Authorities. Few will be forward to diſpute the Certainty of Rewards, and therefore I ſhall conſider it purely with reſpect to Puniſhments: And 1ſt, That God will diſpence certain Puniſhments

upon the Violation of any Law of Nature, follows from the general Ends and Intentions of all Law-givers; especially the Supreme Divine Law-giver, that gave Being to every Soul, that is capable of receiving a Law, as well as Laws to govern them by. Now no Law-giver can ever give Laws to others, without designing, for some special Ends and Purposes, to have them executed, and observed: Without this it's absurd, for a Law-giver to engage in enacting Laws, or trouble his Subjects with the Burden that arises from the Imposition of them. In a word, it's to act in vain, or to no purpose; an Imputation that cannot without Horror, and Blasphemy be charged upon God, who is always governed by the unchangeable Dictate of infinite Wisdom. Therefore since we must conclude, that the Sovereign Lord of all the World, is acted with the deepest concern to have his Laws executed, since Punishment is the best Expedient to enforce the Execution of 'em, and since Punishment is due upon the Violation of 'em, it must follow that Punishment will attend the Violation of 'em.

§. 3. But 2*dly*, The Certainty of Puniſhment diſcovers itſelf from the Nature of theſe Laws, with relation to thoſe Beings to whom they are given. Now it's already concluded, That Laws of Nature ariſe from the eſtabliſhed Frame and Condition of our Beings, and Concenter with the prime Ends and Intereſts of 'em. The Obſervance of Laws of Nature bring natural Rewards along with 'em, ſufficient to recommend 'em to the Choices of reaſoning Beings; and the Violation of 'em implies a Renuntiation, not only of the common Rules of Prudence, but Self-preſervation, the neceſſary Inſtinct of ſenſitive unthinking Beings. And therefore when Laws of Nature are violated, there ſeems no Room or Foundation left to excite or work upon infinite Mercy: Indeed, did God act like an *Egyptian* Task-maſter, and not only require Brick without Straw, but continue the Tail upon the greateſt Sweat and Drudgery, merely to exert an abſolute Sovereignty and Dominion, he might ſometimes be melted into Compaſſion, when a poor Vaſſal happens to fall ſhort of the Line of

Duty; but now the Violation of them, implies the higheſt Aggravations of Folly, and reſolved Iniquity; and therefore we cannot imagine that any thing can induce an infinitely wiſe Creator to ſuſpend any Puniſhments he can juſtly execute.

§. 4. But *3dly*, Let us conſider the Nature of the Command, with reſpect to God that gave them. Now certainly, ſince it is concluded, That Laws of Nature, or Dictates of Nature take their Riſe from the Author of Nature, they are not only eſtabliſhed according to the original Frame of created Nature; but according to the infinite Purity and Holineſs of God: They are the expreſs Image of his Perſon, and the Brightneſs of that infinite Mind, with whom there is no Shadow of Darkneſs or Impurity. On this Account the Violation of Laws of Nature, is not only an Affront committed againſt the Majeſty and Sovereign Authority of God; but a groſs Aſperſion upon his infinite Purity and Holineſs; and conſequently it muſt engage him in the deepeſt Reſentments: So that Puniſhment is now no more an Act

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of Sovereignty, but an Act of Justice, to wipe off the Dirt that is by this means cast upon his infinite Purity: If He's of purer Eyes than to behold, much less to cohabit with Iniquity, certainly he must be armed with the highest Resentments, even such as will answer the Character he has given of himself, *for our God is a consuming Fire.* And therefore though his infinite Love and Mercy, might sometimes engage him to remit the Punishment that is due to the Violation of a known Law, yet his infinite Justice will not suffer him, till he has satisfied the Demands of his infinite Purity and Holiness. In one word, whosoever seriously surveys the Actions of the Almighty, will plainly discover how directly all his Laws result from the whole Circle of his Divine Attributes; and therefore it's a senseless Project to set up his Mercy against his Justice, Purity and Goodness, and thereupon promise our selves an Exemption from Punishment: It's evident therefore that Laws of Nature, as well as all other Laws are guarded with Punishments suitable to the Nature of 'em. And if God is not concerned to vindicate his Authority,

he'll certainly be concerned to vindicate his infinite Purity and Goodneſs; and therefore we may conclude *tho' Hand joyn in Hand, the Diſobedient ſhall not go unpuniſhed.* I will not pretend to fix a Standard of Puniſhment for Offences committed againſt Laws of Nature, I mean with reſpect to the Nature, Degrees or Continuance of them; for tho' there are a great many Arguments that might ſuggeſt very conſiderable Diſcoveries in theſe matters; yet I think they were in a great meaſure Secrets lodged in the Hands of God, till he thought fit to reveal himſelf in Caſes of this Nature, this being the proper Buſineſs of Revelation: It's ſufficient to Believers and Chriſtians, that he has now done it beyond all diſpute or cavil. Again, I will not pretend to conclude every particular Soul that acts againſt Laws of Nature under the Vengeance of Heaven: Puniſhment no doubt will be proportioned according to the means of Information, and there may be certain Caſes in a State of Nature, where invincible Ignorance may be a Plea at the Bar of Juſtice to particular Perſons; but yet the Actions of Men are intricate, and Humane

mane Knowledge shallow, and of a narrow compass; and therefore we must leave these as Secrets to the *Discerner of Spirits*, and that *Candle of the Lord*, I mean every Man's particular Conscience. It's sufficient that the Violations of Laws of Nature antecedent to Revelation, render Mankind obnoxious to Punishments, and that all the Reason in the World instructs us, God will infallibly inflict them. And therefore it's the Concern of Mankind, either to live in the Observance of 'em, or to appear with a more substantial Defence than I can think of, lest they bring themselves into an irreversible State of Condemnation.

Chap. X.

Of the Original of Parental Duty, Love, and Affection; and filial Reverence, and Duty.

§. 1. IT was not my Design to descend to Particulars, no more than to present the World with an exact List or Catalogue of Laws of Nature. Several Attempts of this kind have been made by eminent and learned Hands, some with great Success, and to all imaginable Satisfaction. It's sufficient if I have in some Measure prepared a Key that will unlock the Cabinet; and so far let us into the Book of Nature, that we may by the Workings of natural Reason discover the great Lines of Laws of Nature, and judge which are to be ranked into the number, and which esteemed positive. But since the whole Hypothesis is advanced without any regard to relative Characters, and consequently the Original and Obligation of relative Duties are not so directly measured

red by it; I shall take the Liberty of enquiring into those which God in his Providence has made so important in the Affairs of Men, I mean those between Parents and Children. And first of a parental Love and Affection: Indeed this is a Passion so deeply impressed on the Frame of the Soul, that it powerfully discovers itself thro' all the Parts of the Animal World. To love our own Off-spring, seems to be the Effects of a natural Instinct or Propension, that as violently exerts itself, as the Spark that flies upwards. The Moral Vertuoso's of the present Age are here shamefully foiled, in projecting their Scheme: For tho' they may labour to stifle the Evidences of other Laws, that bespeak them to be the pure Workings of Nature; the Testimony which the sensitive Order of Creatures bears to this of natural Affection, renders their Attempts wholly unsuccessful. It might have been replied, That a parental Affection expressed in the Care of their own Off-spring, is only a fashionable Imployment, set on foot to perpetuate their own Names and Memories; but when the lower Order of Creatures, that want Faculties to form any such

ſuch foreſighted Projections, diſcover an equal Share of Concern, Induſtry and Compaſſion; they as well as we muſt conclude that it's the Effect of ſome peculiar Propenſions, wove in with the Frame and Conſtitution of our Beings. Indeed the Fondneſs, Vigilance, Labour and Induſtry, that unthinking Brutes exerciſe towards there own Off-ſpring, cannot be reſolved into any thing, but a powerful Sympathy and Earning which God hath implanted in them, as they bear their own Image and Repreſentations, or rather as they are the Effects of their own moſt intimate Powers and Faculties, and carry their own Principles of Life, Blood, and Spirits in 'em; or, in a word, as they imply the moſt ſenſible Expanſion and Propagation of their own Natures.

And here I cannot well forbear a ſhort Digreſſion. If it be enquired how theſe inward Motions are excited, I think it may be ſafely replied, Not by Reaſon, or a formal Inference; for no Inference can be made even from particular Objects, but by the help of abſtract Ideas, or general Notions, or Maxims, and a Power of comparing and diſtinguiſhing two

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or more things together: Thus, Suppoſe a Lioneſs by Reaſon were to conclude that this, and not another, to wit, a ſecond, third, or fourth Whelp is her own Off-ſpring; ſhe muſt compare the Off-ſpring in certain Lineaments and Features, or other ſenſible Qualities, with the Idea ſhe had before conceived; ſhe muſt compare this with the Idea ſhe has of thoſe ſhe rejects; and after a ſtrict Agreement with the former, and a palpable Diſagreement with the latter, ſhe cannot come to a rational Aſſent without ſome abſtracted Ideas of Identity and Diverſity, or without the help of two general Maxims, that where the preſent Object exactly agrees with the Idea before conceived, it is the ſame, and where the preſent Object differs from the Idea, which another particular Object yields, it cannot be the ſame but another. This is the Analyſis of the moſt ſimple Reaſoning, and of a narrower compaſs too, than ſome of Mr. *Lock*'s Complex Ideas, and therefore I cannot but wonder how he, upon his Definition of Reaſon, can aſſign Reaſon to Brutes, eſpecially when he denies them a Power of abſtracting, or compounding, or forming Complex Ideas

deas, and allows them a Power of comparing only in a very inferior Degree. *See* Eſſay B. 2. Cap. 11. *and* B. 4. Cap. 17.

But to return, It's viſible theſe inward Motions of Tenderneſs and Compaſſion are excited by the Emanation of certain Particles peculiar to the Off-ſpring of each reſpective Kind or Order of Brutes, chiefly affecting the Senſe of Smelling. And hence the ſilly Brute exerciſes the ſame Fondneſs towards her Siſter's Off-ſpring; nay, even towards one of another Order, in caſe the difference in Form, Smell, Shape or Proportion is not too notorious. Hence, we may preſume, the Affection dwindles and wears off, as theſe Particles that accompanied the Off-ſpring from the Womb, decay in Power and Efficacy; and conſequently that by a Law of Providence they retain 'em, till they are capable of providing for their own Subſiſtence. From all this it's indiſputably evident, that a parental Affection is implanted in the very Frame and Conſtitution of Unthinking Brutes. And therefore, ſince Providence has inſtituted the ſame Laws and Methods for bringing Mankind into the World, with thoſe he has aſſign'd

aſſign'd to Brutes, we muſt conclude that he has created 'em with the ſame original Propenſions; and as he has given 'em nobler Powers and Faculties, as Springs and Movements to every Action, ſo we muſt conclude that theſe Propenſions in Men are ſet on Work after a different manner from thoſe in Brutes. They are not acted by pure Senſations, but by the Powers of Reaſon added to 'em; for when a Child is repreſented to the Mind to be the moſt lively Exertion of our vital Powers and Faculties, *to be Bone of our Bone, and Fleſh of our Fleſh*, the firſt Aſſent to ſuch an Idea, muſt actuate theſe native Propenſions into all the Offices of Love, Care and Tenderneſs. Theſe are but the natural Sallies of that Affection which we were created with towards ourſelves; for *no one as yet ever hated his own Fleſh, but nouriſheth and cheriſheth it.* So that a parental Affection is ſo much a Law of Nature, that the firſt Suggeſtions of Reaſon excite to the exerciſe of it. A ſingle Concluſion commands an Aſſent to the Duty, and at the ſame time kindles or actuates the Affections into a Practice ſuitable to it. Indeed it's a Law that ſo apparently reſults from the Frame

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of Humane Nature, that it carries the Appearance of being Innate; and, in one word, for Man to love and cheriſh his Off-ſpring, is certainly the Reſult of an innate Propenſion; but the exerciſe of it from the conſideration of the cloſe Affinity it bears to his own Fleſh and Blood, is a Work of Reaſon. This ſeems to be a Law truly written in our Hearts, for if we ever think or reaſon upon the Subject, Nature will command a practical Aſſent to it. Indeed Reaſon does not more carefully dictate the Law than Nature; both within and without conſpire to enforce the Practice of it; for if the firſt Workings of Reaſon powerfully excite a paternal Affection, I'm ſure the primitive Impotence in which Providence has decreed Mankind to be brought forth, loudly inſtructs us we ſhould exert it in the moſt affectionate Methods of Preſervation.

In a word, A parental Care and Affection is ſo clearly pointed out as a Duty, even by the Dictates of Natural Reaſon, that the perpetual Reproaches, which the Care and Conduct of ſenſeleſs Brutes throw upon the Neglect of it, are (one would think) Puniſhment or Motive ſufficient

ficient to enforce the Obſervance of it. And therefore where ſuch natural Bowels of Compaſſion are wanting, it's an infallible Indication that the Mind is deſperately ſunk in Barbarity. And now let the Latitudinarian endeavour to overturn this Branch of a Law of Nature, by trumping up ſome unnatural Cruelties among the *Greeks*, yet I think it reſts upon an unſhaken Foundation; and therefore before he Rejects it upon ſuch a ſlender Suggeſtion, let him conſider that there are ſome few Monſters among Brutes, that inſtead of Preſerving, deſtroy their own Off-ſpring. And as there are ſome among this Order, ſo God may, *to make known the Power of his Name*, ſuffer ſome Monſters among Men, without injuring a Law, that is eſtabliſhed with ſo much Evidence and Solemnity.

§. 2. I proceed in the ſecond place, to conſider the Foundation and Original of filial Reverence and Duty.

And firſt, I think a parental Care and Tenderneſs, in fencing us from Cold and Nakedneſs, and giving us a liberal Education, when, without the firſt, we muſt have periſhed in our own Impotence,

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is ſufficient, if once applied to the Mind, and attended to, to dictate the higheſt Tokens of Reverence, if not Duty. A ſenſe of ſuch ineſtimable Benefits upon the firſt Convictions of Reaſon, are ſufficient to induce an Obligation to make ſuitable Returns to 'em, and I think nothing leſs than that Honour and Reverence that expreſſes itſelf in a conſcientious Submiſſion to all juſt and equitable Commands. I mean ſuch as paſs for the Conſequences of Laws of Nature, or are fairly conſiſtent with 'em. But this ſeems to carry us no further than the Kindneſs of a ſignal Benefactor indiſpenſably obliges us to; whereas a Parent implies ſomething more conſiderable than the Notion of a Benefactor can ſuggeſt, and therefore Reaſon ſeems to dictate that God hath raiſed a more ſtrict and abſolute Foundation of Obedience; and certainly the Obedience which is paid towards a Parent, is naturally acted with ſuch a reverential Awe and Deference, as argues a kind of Authority and Dominion, and conſequently contains ſomething more in it than a Senſe of Benefits. And truly our great Creator hath ſufficiently diſcovered the thing, ſince he ſeems

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to have raised an Obedience from the same Title, upon which his Right of Obedience is established; a creating as well as preserving Power. For since he has decreed to make Parents the great Instruments of our Production and Existence, as well as Preservation, we must conclude, that he intended to establish an Obedience upon it. It's abundantly concluded, that as God is, by the Powers of Natural Reason, represented to us to be the great Fountain of our Being and Preservation, a Sense of Duty and Obedience, as well as a Right of Obedience, as powerfully results from it, as Light from the Sun.

And since Parents, by a Divine Decree, are honoured with the same Characters in as eminent a manner as is consistent with the Nature of a Creature or Substitute; and are Created with strong and invincible Propensions, as well as Laws and Obligations, to answer the Intentions of them, Reason will oblige us to conclude, that God has thereby induced Obligations of a subordinate Obedience, that is, in all those Cases wherein he has not expresly interposed by a Law of Nature, or Revelation.

lation. Indeed this seems to be an Expedient to establish and confirm that supreme Right of Obedience which his creative preserving Power challenges over us; and in a word, his appointing our Production in a strict Imitation of his Methods of Creation, is an Argument of his Intentions to establish an unquestionable Right of Dominion in both Cases: Since the same Motives instruct us to acknowledge a supereminent Right of Dominion in our Common Parent, and a subordinate one in our Natural.

§. 3. But further, it's already concluded, That the Offices of Parental Duty are enforced upon the strongest Propensions, as well as Obligations, even an invincible Concern for our own Flesh and Blood; and where the Concern is reciprocal, we cannot imagine but it serves to establish a Right of Duty and Obedience, as well as enforce it. But now as the great Creator of the World thought it necessary to represent and enforce the Duty of Parents by certain indeleble Propensions, so Reason will instruct us, that he has constituted

tuted Propensions as powerful in Children, upon which he intended to establish a Sense of Duty, as well as enforce an Obedience. Indeed where the Duties are equally binding, of the same moment and importance, and an equal Intention to maintain and enforce 'em, we cannot imagine but our wise Lawgiver would make the same Provisions to see his Designs and Intentions answered. And truly the Duties of both turn upon the same Foundation, a passionate Affection to our own Flesh and Blood. For the Concern we entertain for it in ourselves, will naturally convey itself to those that are but one remove from us. This is so apparent, that it's justly to be esteemed a main Foundation of the common Bowels of Humanity, and those Social Offices we exercise as Men towards one another.

But to return; It's visible, the Alliance is equal on both hands, and consequently we may justly presume, that the Propensions of Duty and Reverence are as strong on the Child's part, that receives a Being and Subsistence, as the Propensions of Care and Compassion on the Parents that ministers both.

The Maxim holds this way, *no one as yet ever hated his own Flesh.* From all this it's evident, since God has implanted such deep and powerful Propensions, we must conclude, that the bare Proposal of a Parent to the Mind, so as to apprehend the true force and purport of the Term, will naturally command these Propensions into the highest Instances of Duty and Obedience, as well as Awe and Reverence: This is a Duty so legible in the Frame and Constitution of our Beings, that Nature, by the help of a single Conclusion at the same time, dictates and enforces it: And I'm perswaded, were not the Frame of the Soul, in this as well as other Cases, miserably perverted by vitious Habits, or Dispositions, contracted thro' Education, or Example, it's impossible but she must rest under a perpetual Sense and Apprehension of it.

And now let some Men Harangue upon the Act of Generation as liberally and contemptibly as they please, we have all the Reason in the World to believe, that God has made it one Ground of an eternal and indispensable Duty. I'm sure he that subscribes to the

the Truth and Divinity of the Sacred Oracles, must own it as such, since we find it expresly assigned as an Argument of the Duty: *Hearken unto thy Father that begat thee*, Prov. 23. ver. 22. But then when we consider, that we did not only take our Rise from the Loins of a Parent, but drew all our Blessings thro' his Care and Inspection, and that God, by a special Decree, enjoyned it upon 'em as an indispensable Duty, it's an evident Confirmation of the fundamental Title, that of Generation, and an unquestionable Argument, that God intended to induce indispensable Obligations of Obedience upon it. And truly he that considers and allows God's Right of Dominion to be founded in his creative preserving Power, must allow a subordinate Right of Dominion in him whom he has made the immediate Instrument and Substitute for displaying the Glory and Wonders of it.

Thus far, I presume, it's abundantly evident, that the Obligations of Filial Duty and Obedience rest upon an unquestionable Foundation. That which remains, is to consider the Extent of

'em; and this will best be performed by applying 'em to the first Parent of Mankind, from whom the Notion will present itself as it lies in its original Model. And certainly we may, in the first place, affirm, That Filial Duty and Obedience doth not barely consist in any external Ceremonies, or Instances, of Respect, nor even those that terminate in Obligations to succour and relieve a Parent under Want or Distress; but it extends to the Regulation of our Lives and Actions by Commands and Laws in all the Parts and Instances of Human Life.

§. 4. From what has already been offered, I think it may, with force of Reason, be affirmed, That the first Parent of Mankind is, by God, invested with a Sovereign Power over his Offspring to prescribe Laws for the Conduct of their Lives and Actions, in all Cases and Emergencies pursuant to the Laws of God—, whether natural or revealed, or where God has no way interposed to the contrary. And pursuant to this, it's an uncontroverted Truth, that the Patriarchs rightfully exercised the

the Priestly Function, till God interposed by a positive Institution, and constituted a standing Order of Men to *wait on his Altar*; this is so agreeable to the Divine Will, that though private Persons cannot preside in the public Worship of God without an Intrusion of the Priestly Office, yet every Parent by Divine Designation and Appointment is still a kind of Priest within the District of his own Family: And certainly if a Paternal or Patriarchal Power originally includes a Priestly Power, I can see no Reason to dispute the Authority of a Kingly Power. And agreeable to this, History assures us, that the Kings of *Egypt*, as well as other Governments, originally exercised a Sacerdotal as well as Civil Jurisdiction.

But to proceed: The Business, or Design and Authority of the supreme Power, or in a word, of all those delegated Powers which God hath or ever will establish among Mankind, is to prescribe Laws for the Regulation of our Lives and Actions in all Cases and Emergences. And if Government and positive Human Laws—— by the Laws of Nature and the Frame of our Beings

are absolutely necessary to the Conduct of Mankind in a State of Nature, as well as Grace; we have all the Reason in the World to conclude, that this Power and Authority was originally lodged in the paternal Power of *Adam* over his own Off-spring. It's certain, the Prerogatives of the Supreme Power, do not extend to the wresting away real Rights and Immunities which the Laws of Nature or Revelation give us; for their original Institution is to advance the Wellfare and Happiness of Mankind, by securing and enforcing the observance of them; and therefore since it is indisputably concluded, that an authoritative Power is lodged in the Fatherhood, there is no Obstruction in the Nature of the Thing, but the Paternal Power of *Adam* might extend to the imposing such Laws as are fitted to answer these Ends and Purposes. Indeed God's making Government necessary, seems to advance his Paternal Power to all the Rights and Prerogatives of it, unless he had established it upon another Foundation by some express Law; for God having created the Off-spring of

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Adam with the strongest Propensions of Obedience to him as a Father, God having established an Obedience upon the same Principles upon which he challenges our Obedience, we must conclude, that a Right of Obedience accrews to *Adam* as a Father in all those Cases wherein God has made it necessary for Mankind to be governed by Laws: And since God has made it necessary for the Off-spring of *Adam*, and in them, the Off-spring of Mankind (even by the highest Necessity, that of Nature and Existence) to live by Society, and to be governed by Laws in order to the enforcement of the Laws of God, whether Natural or Revealed, and in them in order to the Security of the Wellfare and Happiness of Mankind, the Paternal Power of *Adam* must originally extend to all the Prerogatives of delegated Power, so that by vertue of his Characters which God brought him into the World under, he's to all Intents and Purposes God's immediate Vice-gerent, unless some positive and express Law had signified the contrary.

In a word, a Necessity arising from the Frame and Order of Nature, is, in

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a State of Nature, the proper Evidence for Divine Designation and Appointment, or indeed, for any Law of Nature; and therefore since Civil Government is thus far necessary, Reason will dictate God's Intentions in placing it, that is, according to the Order of Nature, or where he has placed the principal Marks of Authority or Supremacy. Indeed the Notion is founded on Arguments so clear and convincing, that natural Reason dictates an Allegiance, as forcibly from a Paternal Power as that of Compact, tho' there were nothing in the Nature of the former that interferes with the Hypothesis of the latter; for an Allegiance which derives from Compact, must rest upon the Authority of Compact, whereby it becomes indispensably binding to all the Ends and Purposes of Civil Government. And I think natural Reason, upon the received Laws of the Creation, as clearly fixes an Allegiance in the Paternal Power, as a Law of God and Nature, as it pronounces the Maintainance of such Compacts, a Law of God or Nature. But then if upon Matter of Fact, or the revealed Methods of the Creation, there is any thing

thing repugnant to such a Compact, the Authority of a Paternal Allegiance cannot be rejected. Now we profess and believe, that *Adam* was the Father of Mankind; for even the Woman of whom the rest of his Progeny was to be Born, by an Omnipotent Power issued forth of him; and since it's concluded, That for this Reason as well as for the Offices of his Paternal Function, a real Superiority as well as a Right of Allegiance is derived to him, we must conclude, that his Off-spring could not challenge a Right of Compact any way derogatory to that Preheminence and Superiority which the Laws of God and Nature had thus placed him in. In a word, it's manifest his Age, his Knowledge and Experience gave him a civil Preheminence over his Off-spring, and if we add this to his Paternal Rights, Reason will force us to acknowledge an Anthoritative Superiority. Here is not a bare Priority in Time, or Place, or for Order, or external Ceremony; but a Priority, or rather Superiority in Power and Authority. Now all this loudly exposes the Conceit of an original State of Equality, without which, there can be

be no Colour or Foundation for an original Contract. Indeed this is a Conjecture ſo vain and groundleſs, that the Divine Methods in Peopling the World by Deſcent and not by a Multitude at once, is ſufficient to ſhake the Credit of it. And certainly nothing but the wild Suppoſition which Mr. *Hobbs* has begged to advance his Hypotheſis, is contradicted by Matter of Fact, (I mean a Multitude of Men, by Divine Appointment, ſprung up like Muſhrooms) or an open Renunciation of the Hiſtory of the Creation, can aſſert the Doctrine of a natural Equality. But to conſider the Argument of Compact a little further: It's certain, Compact is no further valid, than it is materially, or intrinſically good; and therefore no one can rightfully enter into Compact, to reſign up or cancel any Laws of God or Nature, or in a word, any further than it is conſiſtent with the true Ends of Government; and thus far the Neceſſity of Government (without any Injury to natural Liberty) ſeems to place its Power and Authority in the Perſon in whom the very Order of Nature, as well ſome peculiar Marks of Sovereignty, have apparently fixed it.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

Reflections on ſome Paſſages in Mr. Lock's *Eſſay of Human Underſtanding, and a Treatiſe of Government.* Part 2.

§. 1. AND firſt, Mr. *Lock* having fixed the Original of what the World generally calls Principles, *though never ſo remote from Reaſon*, in the Power of Education, whereby they are rivetted in the Mind before the Memory begins to keep a Regiſter of their Actions, he obſerves, Men from hence conclude, *That thoſe Propoſitions, of whoſe Knowledge they can find in 'emſelves no Original, were certainly the Impreſs of God and Nature upon their Minds*, and not taught them *by any one elſe*. This he endeavours to illuſtrate by the Inſtance of Filial Reverence. *Theſe* (ſays he) *they entertain and ſubmit to, as many do to their Parents with Veneration; not becauſe*

cauſe it is Natural, nor do Children do it, where they are not ſo taught, but becauſe having been always ſo educated, and having no Remembrance of the beginning of this Reſpect, they think it is natural, Eſſay B. 1. Cap. 3. §. 23.

I will not peremptorily limit the Words to a Senſe which they ſeem to expreſs. If Mr. *Lock*, by the Term *Natural*, intends ſo as Native Inſcriptions are, then I can readily grant that a Filial Veneration is not in this Senſe Natural. But if he affirms that it is not Natural, as Laws of Nature are (which he ſeems to do, when he tells us, that Children would not pay any Veneration, were they not ſo taught) then he muſt pardon me if I cannot joyn with him in the Notion; for I hope I have ſufficiently proved that Children are naturally endowed with as ſtrong Propenſions of Filial Reverence and Reſpect, as thoſe in Parents of Parental Tenderneſs and Compaſſion; and that the bare Perception of the Idea or Term Parent, would naturally Actuate theſe native Propenſions in ſuch a manner, as to command not only Solemn Reverence and Reſpect, but Filial Obedience, had not

not Education or ill Example ſuggeſted ſomething to the contrary. Indeed, I'm perſwaded, a great deal of Filial Reverence and Duty is worn off by thoſe Devolutions, which the Reaſons and Neceſſities of civil Government have made in the chiefeſt Branches of Parental Power; otherwiſe I queſtion not but a Senſe of the higheſt Veneration and Duty, would conſtantly poſſeſs the Minds of Men, as no doubt it did under the firſt Government, where the Supreme Power was both Parent and Sovereign.

§. 2. But to conſider the Poſitions of another Treatiſe, I preſume, well known to Mr. *Lock*.

And firſt in order to overturn the Parental Power, as it extends to Government. This Gentleman, as well as Mr. *Hobbs* (tho' both in a different Way) thinks he has gain'd the Field, by proving, that the Mother is an equal Sharer in that Power which accrews to a Father as a Parent: He proves it from both Teſtaments, particularly *Exod.* 20. 12. and *Eph.* 6. 1. and the Remark is, *Had but this one thing*

thing been well conſidered, without looking any deeper into the Matter, it might perhaps have kept Men from running into thoſe groſs Miſtakes, they have made about Parents. Two Treatiſes of Government, *Part* 2. *Cap.* 6. §. 52, 53. Now in Anſwer to this, I will not deny but the Word of God enjoyns Duty and Obedience to both Parents; but he cannot be ignorant but it muſt be aſſigned to the Mother, only in a Subordinate manner; for elſe I would fain know how with any colour of Truth or Reaſon he expounds theſe Paſſages. *Thy Deſire ſhall be to thine Husband, and he ſhall rule over thee*, Gen. 3. 16. *Wives ſubmit yourſelves unto your own Husbands, as unto the Lord; for the Husband is the Head of the Wife, even as Chriſt is the Head of the Church. Therefore as the Church is ſubject unto Chriſt, ſo let the Wives be unto their own Husbands in every thing*, Eph. 5. 22. *&c.* St. *Peter* is as large on the ſame Argument, to whom I ſhall refer him, *Eph.* 1. 3. So that it's evident the revealed Law gives a ſupereminent Power to the Father, even as a Father, as well as a Husband; ſince the Wife is to *obey in all things*, and

and conſequently to give place to his Authority, in laying his juſt Command upon his Children.

But further, the natural Frame of Man, not only in reſpect of Strength and Vigour of Body, but Courage and Reſolution of Mind, ſeems to give him ſo much Superiority and Preheminence, as by the Dictates of Natural Reaſon is ſufficient to eſtabliſh a ſupereminent Power and Authority to that of the Woman: I'm ſure the holy Spirit draws the Character not unlike this, when the Woman is ſtil'd *The weaker Veſſel.* But now, in the preſent Argument, we are to have recourſe to Matter of Fact, by conſidering the Method God took in the Production of the Woman; for the Diſpute being whether *de facto*, the Paternal Power of *Adam* was Supereminent to that of the Woman; It's abundantly concluded if it be made appear from the eſtabliſhed Methods of the Creation; and the Argument is the ſame in the Original of Government; for this is to be taken from Mat-

ter of Fact, eſpecially as long as 'tis recorded and tranſmitted upon unqueſtionable Authority; and when once the Original of Government is fixed, the Succeſſion of Governments will eaſily be accounted for, without Projecting an imaginary State of Nature and Equality, and original Compact upon it. It is not my Buſineſs now to draw the Scheme, but if this Author will not be content without it, he ſhall have it upon Demand; and therefore it's unpardonable Arrogance in thoſe that receive the Story of the Creation, to erect a Scheme without any regard to it, or rather ſuch as is highly inconſiſtent with the plain Doctrines of it.

But to return, the Records of the Creation aſſure us, That the Woman, or Mother of Mankind, took her Being from the Man; God did not think fit to give her an Original Independent of the Man, by an immediate Creation from common Matter, but made her a Debtor to the Man, by forming her of his Fleſh and Blood; and therefore if this is al-

allowed, natural Reason will pronounce it a Mark of natural Subjection, and consequently assign her no more than a subordinate Authority. I'm sure the holy Spirit remarks as much, where we are expressly told, *The Head of the Woman is the Man*, and that *He is the Image and Glory of God; but the Woman is the Glory of the Man, for the Man is not made of the Woman, but the Woman of the Man; neither is the Man created for the Woman, but the Woman for the Man*, 1 Cor. 11. 3, 7, 8, 9.

But further, If a natural Subjection does not Result from the Laws of Creation, we may find it establish'd by a Positive Law: *For thy Desire shall be to thy Husband, and he shall Rule over thee*, Gen. 3. 16. Indeed it deserves our Notice to observe how this Author labours to droll away the Import of the Text, by exposing *Adam*'s Monarchy, being in the next Verse, in his own Language, *Condemned to be a Day-labourer for Life*, Pa. 1. Cap. 5. §. 44, 45. But who sees not thro' the Weakness of the Harangue, for

after all his Tricks and Inſinuations he's not able to prove that God has not placed the Woman in a State of Subjection, tho' it be interpreted as part of her Puniſhment, and conſequently eſtabliſhed a ſupereminent Power and Authority in *Adam*, tho' he wanted not his Puniſhment in being condemned to reap the Bleſſings of this Life, even of Government itſelf, in continual Sweat and Labour. Here is not a ſupereminent Power eſtabliſhed in Compact, but conferred by God himſelf. Indeed it's indiſputably evident, all thoſe Rights of Dominion that were inveſted in *Adam*, even that which reſults from his Conjugal Eſtate, was conferred by God; for tho' God was pleaſed to leave the Conjugal Eſtate of his Deſcendents, to be eſtabliſhed upon voluntary Contracts, he thought fit to make his an immediate Grant as well as the Authority of it. But then, tho' the entring into a State of Matrimony now is a pure Compact, yet the Authority that derives upon the Husband from it, is by no means a piece of Compact; this is

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eſtabliſhed by God alone in the firſt Inſtitution of Matrimony, and enforced by After-laws.

The Sum of all is this, The Rights of Parental Juriſdiction conſidered in the Nature of the Thing itſelf, had been in common to our firſt Parents, had not God ſignified the contrary, by giving the *Woman* a Being from the *Man*, and aſſigning him a ſupereminent Power by an expreſs Law; and ſince this is abundantly evinced, I hope an imaginary State of Equality or Freedom ſhall not hinder God from limiting his own Ordinances at Pleaſure; and conſequently the Rights of the Paternal Power are indiſputably inveſted in the Fatherhood. Here is the main Effort of our Adverſaries; for the only Artifice to ſtrip the Fatherhood of all civil Juriſdiction, was to clog the Notion with Abſurdities, by contending for a joynt Juriſdiction in the Mother, upon the Foundations of the Parental Power; and therefore this being ſet aſide, there is nothing left that is of force to Diſcard any of thoſe Prerogatives that have hitherto been aſſigned.

But to proceed, He tells us that the Parental and Political Power *are ſo perfectly Diſtinct and Separate, and Built upon ſo different Foundations, and given to ſo different Ends, that every Subject that is a Father, has as much a Paternal Power over his Children as the Prince has over his*, Ib. §. 7. But it's manifeſt the Argument is, concerning Paternal and Political Power, as it was in the original Inſtitution of 'em. And it's already granted, that Paternal and Political Power, as exerciſed in the preſent Governments of the World, are viſibly diſtinguiſhed; but it cannot be an Argument they were ſo in their Original. The preſent Governments of the World reſt upon different Foundations from what Government did in its Original, and yet it does not follow that their Foundation was an original Compact from a perfect State of Nature or Equality, for I defie this Author to prove that there was ever any Body of Men regularly and *de jure* in ſuch a State, ſince the Creation, unleſs Manumitted by the Civil Power.

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Again, the Exercise of the Paternal Power in private Families, that are the Descendents of *Adam*, is vastly different from what it was in the Original; for God having made Government necessary to the Support of Mankind, it was absolutely necessary that that part of the Paternal Power, which consists in Governing by Laws, should devolve from Under-families upon *Adam*, and consequently in After-governments it must still remain in the Father of each respective Government, or in other Terms in the Governing Power. But notwithstanding all this, the commanding Power and Authority, which has been abundantly asserted to be in the original Rights of the Paternal Power, by the Laws of God, and the Reasons of the thing, still remains in private Parents or Fathers, where the Civil Power has not expressly interposed, or where it's necessary it should exert itself in the Conduct of Humane Life. But to demonstrate from eternal Distinction of Paternal from Political Government, he, in another place, presents us with

an Inſtance of a Stranger's coming into a Family, who ſhould Kill one of the Patriarch's Children; upon which he allows the Patriarch a Power to put him to Death, and yet he ſays it's impoſſible he ſhould do it *by Vertue of any Paternal Authority*, Ib. §. 74. Now, for my part, I'm ſo far from diſcerning any Impoſſibility, that I cannot fathom the Conſequence of the Argument. For certainly unleſs he would beg the Queſtion, or pronounce it Impoſſible, that a Paternal Power ſhould imploy a Coercive Power in it, within the Diſtricts of its Government, over all thoſe that diſturb the Peace of it; why may not the Power of Capital Puniſhments be attributed to a Paternal Power, without a Conſent or Deputation from thoſe Children that are the principal Members of it? Though he cannot puniſh the Stranger as his own Offſpring, yet if a Political Power branches itſelf from a Paternal Power (as has been ſufficiently proved) I hope no one can deny but there is ſuch Powers lodged in it as are ſufficient to ſecure the Ends of Government, and conſequently

quently a Coercive Power to Puniſh any from within or without, that invade the Peace of it.

But *3dly*, To ſupport his own Hypotheſis, and avoid the Political Authority of the Paternal Power, he affirms, That tho' the Duties of Honour and Reſpect are Eternal, yet the commanding Power is Temporary, and ceaſes with Nonage or Minority. See § 64, 67, 69, *&c.* That when this Power expires, Children are in as abſolute a State of Freedom as the Father, and that too, not only in reſpect to the Father's Authority, but of the Civil Government. This is the Subſtance of ſeveral Sections, and it's very viſible, that his chiefeſt Arguments are raiſed upon Paternal Power, as 'tis exercis'd under the eſtabliſhed Governments of the World, which is a Fallacy already detected. But to make ſome Returns according to Method and Order. The Duty of Children I'm perſuaded, in the full Extent of it, is of eternal Obligation, where 'tis not ſuperſeeded by a higher Law, that of Society, upon which account alone (as is already obſerved)

ved) part of it by the Reaſon and Neceſſity of Things devolves upon the Supreme Power. Indeed, if what has been aſſerted carries Evidence and Truth in it, the Duty of Children muſt be Eternal. It has been abundantly proved, That the Ground or Foundation of Filial Duty and Obedience is Eternal, *viz.* That of Generation, and an unchangeable Affection reſulting from it: And if the Ground of Obligation is eternal, the Duty muſt be ſo too.

But to proceed, the Word of God ſeems expreſs in this Matter; for we are not only enjoyned to Honour, but Obey our Parents. Now it's well known, Obedience ſuppoſes a decretory Power, or commanding Authority; and the Precept not being given under any Limitations that make it Temporary, I cannot diſcern by what Authority this Gentleman pronounces it Temporary. Indeed I cannot imagine how any one that receives the Holy Scriptures for the Word of God, can ſafely pronounce the Duty of Filial Obedience Temporary; for we there find it eſtabliſh-

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ed and enforced upon ſuch ample Proviſions, that we muſt believe God deſigned to perpetuate the Obligations of it. The time would fail me to collect all the Paſſages that manifeſtly favour this Notion; I ſhall therefore touch on a few that are very remarkable.

And firſt, the Power of Bleſſing and Curſing exerciſed by the Patriarchs, is a conſiderable Evidence of the Perpetuity of the Duty: It's well known the Patriarchs conſtantly exerciſed this Power, and their Deſcendents as conſciencioufly acknowledged it.

It was a Senſe of this Power, that made *Jacob* Expoſtulate before he embraced his Mother's Expedient: *My Father peradventure will feel me, and I ſhall be to him as a Deceiver; and I ſhall bring a Curſe upon me, and not a Bleſſing*, Gen. 27. *v.* 12. It's certain the Patriarchs challenged an indiſputable Right to exerciſe this Power; for tho' *Jacob* had obtained the Bleſſing by an ungenerous Artifice, or Stratagem, yet *Iſaac* thought himſelf obliged to confirm it; *I have bleſ-*

bleſſed him, yea, and he ſhall be bleſſed, v. 33. A moſt convincing Argument truly, that this Right of Bleſſing and Curſing was founded in a Divine Original; and certainly there needs nothing more to demonſtrate the Divine Will and Pleaſure than the inſeparable Effects and Conſequences of his Power, ſince we find that the Bleſſings or Curſes of Parents as infallibly purſued their Children as they were diſpenſed. Thus the Bleſſing of *Iſaac* attended *Jacob*, and the Curſes of *Noah* purſued his Son *Canaan*: *Curſed be* Canaan; *a Servant of Servants ſhall he be unto his Brethren*, Gen. 9. *v.* 25. Now certainly a Proviſion of ſuch ſpecial Powers can carry no leſs a Deſign in it than the perpetuating of a Filial Reverence and Duty: If God had not deſign'd to eſtabliſh an Immortal Power and Authority in the Parent, why ſhould he confer ſuch diſtinguiſhing Marks of Sovereignty and Dominion? Can we imagin, that ſuch a tremendous Power was exerted purely to ſecure an Obedience during Minority, and a ceremonious Reverence afterwards excluſive of a com-

commanding Authority? No certainly, this is a Conjecture, that runs counter to all the Accounts of Time; for the Obedience of Children in the firſt Ages of the World was as remarkable as the Parents Commands after a State of Maturity; and indeed it could proceed from nothing leſs than a juſt Senſe of an indeleble Character and Authority, as well as Power to enforce it.

But further, the Duty and Obedience of Children is ſo far from being any wiſe Temporary, that God has given his own expreſs Promiſes to perpetuate the Obligation. St. *Paul* has long ſince obſerv'd, that, *Children obey your Parents, is the firſt Commandment with Promiſe*, Epheſ. 6. 1, 2. And certainly where the Sanction is peculiar or extraordinary, the Obligation of the Command muſt bear a proportion to it; and where God has diſcover'd himſelf ſo eminently ſolicitous to enforce the Duty by ſpecial Rewards as well as Puniſhments, we may conclude he intended to perpetuate it. Thus far the Suffrage of Scripture ſeems clear and indiſputable:

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But if all this will not convince, I ſhall refer this Author to the Story of *Jonadab*, the Son of *Rechab*, out of the very Mouth of the Prophet: The Command or Prohibition was againſt drinking of Wine as well as building of Houſes, which ſeems to be an Abridgment of the Natural Liberties of Mankind, and conſequently if the Commanding Power of Parents ceaſes with Nonage, it may very well do ſo in Caſes of this Nature. But inſtead of this, we find the Obligation aſſerted by a Complication of Arguments; *Jonadab* advances the Command by virtue of a Parental Power and Authority: *Ye ſhall drink no Wine, neither ye nor your Sons for ever, that ye may live many Days where ye be Strangers*, Jer. 35. v. 6, 7. *The very Commandment with Promiſe.* And the *Rechabites* were poſſeſſed with as deep a Senſe of its Obligation; for when the Prophet, by the Command of God, tryed their Fidelity, the only Argument of their Non-compliance, was the Command of their Father *Jonadab*, and the Proſpect of Inheriting the Bleſſing annexed to the

the Command, *Thus have we obeyed the Voice of* Jonadab *our Father, and done all that* Jonadab *our Father commanded us*, v. 8, 9. But this is not all, for the Obligation of the Command is not only recogniſed by Men, even thoſe that were immediately concerned in it, but by God himſelf; for he does not only annex the Promiſe of the Command, to the Obſervance of it: *Becauſe ye have obeyed the Commandment of* Jonadab *your Father, and kept all his Precepts—— Therefore* Jonadab, *the Son of* Rechab, *ſhall not want a Man to ſtand before me for ever*, v. 18, 19. But expreſly repreſents that eternal Obedience that is due to his Commands by it; for this was God's Deſign in obliging the Prophet to try the *Rechabites* Conſtancy and Perſeverance, by ſetting Cups and Pots full of Wine before them, and commanding them to Drink; and therefore the Inference is Recorded: *Go and tell the Men of* Judah, *and the Inhabitants of* Jeruſalem, *Will ye not receive Inſtruction to hearken to my Words? The Words of* Jonadab, *the Son*

Son of Rechab, *that he commanded his Sons are performed; for unto this Day they drink* no Wine, *but obey their Father's Commandment: Notwithſtanding I have ſpoken unto you, riſing up early, and ſpeaking, but ye hearkned not unto me,* v. 13, 14. And now how can any Man diſpute the Perpetuity of a Commanding Paternal Power. Has not God himſelf drawn the Parallel? If his Commanding Power is not Temporary, neither is that of the Parent. The Nature of the Command might have engaged a powerful Advocate againſt it, the Freedoms and Immunities of a reaſonable Being, but yet the Conſcience of ſo juſt a Superior, bearing ſo awful a Character as that of a Father, commands an immediate Submiſſion. Indeed this ſingle Inſtance repreſents it as a Doctrine univerſally received, and in thoſe Ages undiſputed; and therefore I preſume it will be a Task of ſome difficulty for this Author to produce a Diſpenſation, much more a Repeal under the Goſpel OEconomy.

But

But I proceed to consider the Arguments already advanced to support the Notion, and I find the main and principal Argument is formed from the Nature, and Reason of Paternal Authority; for the Author, expresly resolves the commanding Power into *a help to the weakness, and imperfections of their Nonage, a Discipline necessary to their Education, but when they are once arrived to the Enfranchisement of the Years of Discretion, the Father's Empire then ceases.* Sect. 65. But let us consider this in the Instance already given, that of our first Parent. I would demand of this Gentleman, whether after Years of Discretion, a Discipline of Civil Commands, and Laws, were not absolutely necessary for the Conduct of our Lives and Actions; yet as necessary as a commanding Discipline to a Child's Education. If therefore Civil Government from the beginning was necessary, even for Adult Persons, this Discipline must be so too; and then let Reason determine whether this commanding Authoritative Power, or this Discipline of giving Laws, and Commands was not Appropriate to *Adam*, in whom God had invested all deligated Power and Authority; and that too

under the higeſt marks of Sovereignty, and Dominion. I'm perſwaded an unbiaſſed Perſon would pronounce ſuch a Title unqueſtionable, when there is no expreſs Law that declares the contrary. Again he tells us, *The Power which Parents have over their Children ariſes from that Duty which is incumbent on them, to take care of their Off-ſpring during the imperfect State of Childhood. See Sect.* 58. But I am perſwaded, I have with good Evidence fixed it on a diſtinct Foundation. Parental Duty, indeed, is a ſubſtantial Reaſon, that God ſhould Eſtabliſh a Right of Dominion, but it is no Argument that he has Eſtabliſhed it on this Foundation: no, I haveproved the contrary. But admit we, that a Parental Right of Dominion was founded in the Duties of a Parent, yet if Parental Duty be perpetual, a Parental Right of Dominion muſt be ſo too. Indeed, to give colour to this uncouth Notion, he Suggeſts, that that part of Parental Duty which conſiſts in Education, ceaſes when the buſineſs of Education is over, he means when Nonage ceaſes. *Sect.* 69. But certainly, if Inſtruction, or Commands are at any time neceſſary, and not ſuperſeded by a higher

higher Power, it's the Indispensible Duty of the Father to enjoyn them, and the Duty of Children to embrace them. I presume Christianity will instruct every believing Father, that a Child's Age, or Abilities can never exempt him from giving such Counsels, and Precepts (if he stands in need of them,) as may induce him to live in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord. Upon the whole then, the Commands of private Parents after Nonage, are for the most part superseded, by the ample provisions of the Civil Power in all Regular Governments: and in like manner, the power of Punishments is justly taken away upon that Interest, or Property, which the Government challenges in all its Members; but yet if any thing is omitted in the Civil Power necessary to the Conduct of the Child's Life, I am perswaded the Parent is not only to administer Counsel, but lay his Commands, and the Child is indispensibly obliged to yield a Conscriencious Obedience, upon a just Deference to the Parents's Character, and Authority. This is to obey, *as unto God and Christ, and not unto Men.* This Author freely confesses, that the Duty of Piety expressed not only in Acts of

Reverence, and Reſpect, but in ſupporting, and defending the Perſons of our Parents, is perpetual; and I am perſwaded there can be no Juſt Reaſon aſſigned, why a Reverential Obedience to juſt and reaſonable Commands is not perpetual too; it is indeed replyed, that the former Reſults from the Laws of Gratitude, founded in Benefit, ſo inexpreſſible, that the one can never be Cancelled, nor the other Compenſated; but I hope, it is proved they are founded in ſomething beſides, that ſerves to perpetuate an Obligation; and ſince a commanding Power has the ſame Authority and Foundation, I cannot conceive why an Obedience to the Commands of Parents ſhould not be perpetual, where God ſeems to have made ſuch Commands neceſſary to the Conduct of Humane Life. Thus far here's no Foundation given for the Suggeſtion this Author has made in extending the Goſpel-Precept to a commanding Power, as if by virtue of it a Parent ſhould pretend to treat an Adult Son ſtill as a Boy. *Sect.* 68. For the neceſſity of ſuch commands is ſuperſeded by the circumſtances of Age, and Perſonal Abilities; and tho it is reaſonable to conclude

conclude, that a Commanding Power remains, yet it ought at all times to be exercised according to the necessity, and reason of things: In a word, the principal Duties of Parents, and Children appear from the nature of the things to be in their Original Institution perpetual, and therefore before this Author had pronounced them Temporary, he should have considered, whether it was not to make the Commandments of God of none effect, to support his vain, and groundless Traditions, such as a State of Freedom, Equality, and original Contract.

§. 4. To consider the State of Freedom, which is affirmed to be as absolute as that of the Father. The only Reason and Argument assigned for this Freedom, is in his own Language this, *The Freedom then of Man, and liberty of Acting according to his own Will, is grounded on his having Reason, which is able to instruct him in that Law he is to govern himself by, and make him know how far he is left to the freedom of his own Will. Sect.* 63. Now I am content to put the Notion on this issue, with a small matter added to it. If Man at a certain period

is endued with a ſufficiency of Reaſon to inſtruct him in that Law he is to govern himſelf by, and make him know how far he is left to the Freedom of his own Will, and had Ingenuity, and Integrity enough to proſecute it, then I will grant that he may challenge a Freedom, or Liberty of acting according to his own Will without being accountable to any one, till his own voluntary Compact had made him ſo: But then ſuch a ſufficiency as this, muſt ſuperſede the neceſſity of all Civil Government, or poſitive Laws; Certainly then if Man after the utmoſt pretences to Reaſon, has not a ſufficiency of Reaſon at all times to inſtruct himſelf in the Line of Duty, no more than Integrity to adjudge his own Actions conformable to the Line of Duty; we may with very good Reaſon conclude, that Maturity of Reaſon does not cancel the Bonds of Filial Obedience, or (to have reſpect to the inſtance before us,) admit the Children of *Adam* to an equal State of Liberty with himſelf, that is, in his own Language, *To challenge an Executive Power in the Exerciſe of Laws of Nature as much as their Father, as well as Preſcribe to their own Will, and regulate their*

their Actions. These are positions that can no way be reconciled with the necessity of civil Government, under the most improv'd State of Reason, and that Dominion which by the Laws of the Creation, God had invested him with; for God having made Government necessary for the Support of Grown Men, and actually Invested *Adam* with a Right of Dominion; Reason must determine without the breach of Humane Freedom, that the Dominion of *Adam*, was Originally designed to extend as far as was necessary to the Regulation, and Conduct of Humane Actions, as well by Laws, as Counsel. Indeed, the original Mistake is lodged in the Notion of Civil Government compared with Humane Freedom; as if Humane Freedom, or Natural Liberty, were, in the very Notion of it, inconsistent with Government, or as if it were a Breach of Natural Liberty to be placed under the Conduct of that without which, Man with all his Reason cannot Subsist, much less be Happy. Now it is visible, tho' Government implies a Power of imposing, and enforceing Laws, yet the Original Design of it was the Happiness of Mankind in the Regulation of their Lives and Actions,

according to the Laws of God, whether Natural, or Revealed. It is true, the Institution of such a Power may imply an absolute Trust, and whether this Trust is forfeited, and accountable, when the Original Ends of Government are Violated, is another Question. But it is Indisputable these are the only true ends of Government. And I think, no one can affirm, that the direct Methods to Happiness are Breaches of Humane Freedom, yea rather, they are the only Expedients to preserve it, and therefore I can see no Rights in the Exercise of Humane Reason, or Freedom founded on it, to Exempt the Children of *Adam* from that Civil Jurisdiction that Results from his Paternal Power. And now I presume there is enough offered to Reject the pretence of an unlimitted Freedom, I have enlarged more plentifully upon it, because it is the Foundation of that State of Equality, upon which Compact is made the first Principle of Civil Government; for this reason I shall offer a few Arguments more, to represent the Absurdity of it.

§. 5. And first, if Children coming to the exercise of Reason are not only dis-

discharged from their Paternal Allegiance, but acquire a State of Freedom equal to their Father, as this Position directs, *Sect.* 66. Then the Children of *Adam*, had an unquestionable Right to erect a Government over his Head, or at least upon Non-compliance to Exclude him from the Benefits of it; and in a word, to drive him forth from his own Territories; since Civil Governments always challenge a Power to Banish those that refuse to pay Allegiance to them. That the Children, and Descendants of *Adam* could act thus, is evident; for as they were in a State of Freedom, and Equality, they could enter into a Compact at Pleasure, and consequently Establish a Government upon a Majority against their Fathers. It's highly Probable, the Children of our First Parent were acted by so deep a sense of Duty, as would prevent them from the Executing their pretended Privilege; but I am perswaded, were a Set of Men under the Influence of this Author's Principles, placed in a State of Nature under their Natural Father, the Resentments which the Discipline of their Education might give them, would easily engage them to bandy together at such a rate,

as

as to Erect a Government upon his Head; and if they did not call the Old Gentleman to an account for *Male-Administration*, yet upon Non-compliance, they might think themselves obliged to withdraw those small remains of Respect, which this Gentleman has assigned him. However it is manifest, this Position will Vindicate the Lawfulness of the Project, and therefore it can be no Crime to apply it to the Father of Mankind, and his immediate Descendants. But now, what can be more Unnatural than this is? Can Man pretend the least Reverence, or Respect upon such a Horrid Treason as this? Men may Harangue on the Formalities of Respect as long as they please, but certainly it is some Pretensions to Authority that can preserve a Filial Reverence that is truly valuable, that is, such a Reverence as expresses it self in a chearful Obedience to all just, and reasonable Commands.

§. 6. But to draw towards a Conclusion, this Notion of Freedom carries another Absurdity in it as Injurious to the Civil Power, as it is to the Patriarchal, for in order to assert the Notion this

this Author is forced to Discard the Notion of Natural Allegiance, and place every one in a State of Liberty upon their arrival at Years of Discretion, till they shall Recognize the Governing Power by an express, or tacit Consent. An express Consent he fixes in Promises, or Oaths of Allegiance, and a tacit Consent *in the Possession or Enjoyment of any part of the Dominions of any Government*, *Chap.* 8. *Sect.* 119. *Part.* 2. And further adds, that a Tacit Consent only produces a Temporal Allegiance, *So that in case he quits his Possession by Donation, Sale, or otherwise, he is at Liberty to go, and Incorporate himself in any other Common-Wealth, or agree with others to begin a new one* in Vacuis locis *in any part of the World they can find Free, or Unpossessed. Sect.* 121. Now certainly these are Positions that cannot well be consistent with the safety of any Government; for it is manifest, they give a Latitude for Rebellion, as well as Disertion. For *first*, The Descendants of the Liege Subjects of any Government do not yield a Tacit Consent even after they arrive at Years of Discretion, by Living, and Subsisting upon the Blessings of it, unless they possess, or enjoy

enjoy ſome parts of its Dominions; ſo that not only the Adult Children that Live under their Parents without a Settlement, but even the Poor, or Labouring part of a Nation, or even all that are not the true Proprietors of Eſtates, ſtill remain in a State of Nature, unleſs the Government has actually required an Oath of Fidelity. If this be true, as the caſe now ſtands in the *Engliſh* Government, where Oaths of Allegiance are only required but upon Special Occaſions, and where purſuant to our Law, in ſome caſes; he has fixed the term of Nonage at *Twenty One*, he muſt neceſſarily bring a Majority of *Effective Men* within a State of Nature? and therefore tho upon his Principles a Right doth not accrue to the Poſſeſſions of an Eſtabliſhed Government, yet in caſe an Eſtabliſhed Government does not think fit to treat them as Men in a State of Nature, or happens to exerciſe the leaſt ſhadow of Rigour, or Severity upon them, they are according to rule (his own I mean) the proper Executioners of Laws of Nature, and conſequently, they have Right of War, not only againſt their Common, but Natural Parents. And truely, I do not ſee but a

Project

Project of this nature might prove extreamly ſucceſsful, for purſuant to this Learned Hypotheſis, a Body of Rich Male-Contents that have not entred into an expreſs Allegiance, have power to ſell their real Poſſeſſions, and when this is done, they are to all intents, and purpoſes in a State of Nature, and conſequently are prepared upon the firſt Alarm to become Generals to worthy Mobile, and invade their Neighbours Poſſeſſions with Thouſands, and ten Thouſands. Oh! Bleſſed Politicks, to be the ſpawn of *One* that is *called* into the *Counſels* of a Government, *Eats its Bread*, and enjoys places of *Truſt* as well as *Profit*. I am certain, I have repreſented the Notion with all imaginable fairneſs, and tho the Abſurdities that are lodged in it may paſs for a ſufficient Confutation, yet I ſhall offer ſomething further upon it.

And *firſt*, it is on all Hands agreed, that Perſons, as well as Things, may become a Property, and Property in the Judgment of the Learned, eſtabliſheth a Right of Dominion; Conſent at leaſt renders Perſons, or free Agents, as much a Property as neceſſary Agents. Now the diſpute is, whether free Agents may not

not become a Property any other way than by Conſent. It's obſervable, he reſolves the Foundation of Property into Labour, ſo that whatever is the effect of Labour and Induſtry, or has Labour mixed with it, becomes a Property, *See Chap. 5. Sect.* 27, 45. II. *Part.* Now it's manifeſt, not only the Education, and Subſiſtence of Miners, but of thouſands of Perſons that have not expreſly Subſcribed to any Government, is carried on by the Labour, Care, and Conduct of the Government, as well as that of their natural Parents; and therefore Reaſon does not ſuggeſt any thing to me, why they are not from their very Infancy to be eſteemed a Property of the Government, and conſequently a kind of Allegiance, as it were grows up with them to the Government, as well as to their Natural Parents. It's true, it is a Property highly diſtinct from that in Brutes, for the one ſeems to be abſolute, whereas the other muſt be limited, that is, *to Rational Ends, and Purpoſes.* In this Senſe, a free Agent may be a Property of the Supreme Power, as well as that of *Terra firma* in another. But now, ſince the Civil Power challengeth a Property, it cannot be otherwiſe

wiſe than by vertue of the Character it ſelf; I mean that of a Governing Power, and conſequently the Property that accrews from it, muſt Eſtabliſh a Right of Obedience purſuant to it. In a word, the Governing Power challenges a Right of Labour and Aſſiſtance, in order to maintain the Strength, and Grandeur of the Community, and conſequently, the Supreme Power muſt be inveſted with Authority to impoſe Laws for the regulation, and exacting of this Labour, and Induſtry. This is a truth ſo unqueſtionable, that all Eſtabliſhed Governments conſtantly challenge ſuch Services as every Home-born Subject is capable of yielding, and exerciſe Juriſdiction over them with as full Power, as if they had actually Subſcribed to its Authority. This they eſteem an undoubted Prerogative, notwithſtanding any Pretences to a State of Freedom after Nonage. From all this it appears, how unjuſt this Author's Poſition is in Authorizing all thoſe that have not entered into an expreſs Allegiance to deſert a Government at pleaſure; for if the Laws and Meaſures of Property advanced by this Author, give the Supreme Power a Right of Dominion over every Home-born Subject,

Subject, antecedent to all Subscriptions, as I think has been abundantly evinced, the Subject cannot rightfully withdraw himself from his Native Country without Special License from the Government. I know this is a Question controverted by *Grotius*, *Pufendorf*, and others, and they generally agree, that they cannot rightfully withdraw *Gregatim*, because it must destroy the Foundations of Government; but *Pufendorf* argues well, that if one particular Person has a right to withdraw, a Second and Third must have so too, and consequently a multitude, or Body of Men, either jointly or separately. But however, it is universally allowed, that Governments may prescribe Laws in this Affair; and certainly, if a Government can without the express consent of these pretended Free-Born Persons rightfully bind them by Laws, I think the Government has a Right of Allegiance Antecedent to Law; for no Government can pretend a Power of binding by Law, especially, contrary to a Fundamental, Natural Right, where an Antecedent Right of Dominion is wanting, without Compact, or Consent. This is current Doctrine, at least with our Author,

Author, the Man for *Original contract*: In a word, the Sum of what has been hitherto offered by the Learned, is taken from the practices of particular Governments, rather than from the Nature or Reason of the thing. Indeed it cannot be denied, but that particular Persons have withdrawn from their Native Country, but it is to be interpreted by Permission, or Connivance, not by a Right of Natural Freedom, for there can no just Reason be assigned, why Persons as well as Things, may not become a property of the Government, or why a Property is not acquired in both, pursuant to their proper Ends and Uses, by the same Laws and Measures; so that the Labour and Conduct of the Government in preserving, and supporting our Persons, may render us a Property of it to all the true ends and purposes of Government, in a rational way, or manner, as much as the Occupation or quiet Enjoyment, of any tract of Land render it a branch of its Dominions. Thus far I question not but the Government has a Right, or Property, in the Labour and Service of every adult Native, as truly as in the product of the Ground, or the Riches and Treasures of a Coun-

try, and therefore it's absurd to imagine that any one can rightfully withdraw his Person, much less his Effects, or Treasure, and commit himself and them to another Government, whether new or old. As for this Author, he's so highly sensible how much the number of Subjects contributes to the Trade, Riches, Strength and Glory of a Nation; that were the question formally put and argued in the Council of Trade, and his Preferments, as well as Judgment, engaged upon it, I'm perswaded he would think himself obliged to declare against his former Sentiments. In one Word, it's evident these are positions, that (without a Law that enjoyns an Universal explicit Allegiance) must render every Government highly precarious; for if a single Person can challenge a Right of withdrawing, then may a Second and a Third, and so on to a Body, or Multitude, and by this Means a Nation may not only be dispeopled at pleasure, and consequently drained of her Riches and Treasure, but her own natural Subjects may become her most formidable Enemies.

And now having offered what is sufficient to expose the conceipt of natural Free-

Freedom, I think I have abundantly evinced what was before asserted, That there cannot be a Body of Men, regularly and *de jure* in such a State of Nature, as this Author has projected. For tho' we should allow the first Government to be formed upon compact from a State of Nature, yet if Subjects are naturally a property of a Government, it's impossible there should be a Body of Men, in a perfect State of Nature, without a total dissolution of particular Governments; for as for the Independant State of Supreme Powers, produced as an Instance by this Author, he knows very well it proves nothing to his design, or purpose, that is a body of Men in a State of nature, from which a Government is formed upon the Force and Authority of a joint compact. 2dly, This Notion of a State of Freedom being so clearly confuted by that property, which every Government challenges in all the Subjects of it, as well as every Father in their Children; I think it adds to the strength of former Arguments in asserting the Civil Prerogatives of the Paternal Power; as it lay in the original. For *Adam* being not only the Great Parent of Mankind, but the sole proprietary of

Off-Springs, without any Collateral, much leſs Superior Power to defaulk from any of his Prerogatives; if Government by the Laws of Providence was truly ſerviceable, or rather neceſſary, the very Station, as well as Character he bare, is ſufficient to give him a right of Dominion and Sovereignty. And thus far, I hope I have, in ſome meaſure, ſtated the Foundations of Civil Government, purſuant to the Eſtabliſhed Laws of the Creation; and certainly when all Arguments and Circumſtances are fairly laid together, there's no juſt ground or colour for *Original Compact*. Here's a manifeſt Power and truſt, but it ſeems to be the immediate Ordinance and Appointment of God, ariſing from the Eſtabliſhed Frame and order of Things; Not an Arbitrary Deputation or Commiſſion, iſſuing forth of the hands of the People, that were born and formed for Government, and Educated and nurſed up under the Wings of it. I have proved it from the nature of the Thing, and the Laws of Providence, and were we to enquire into the Original of Governments upon matter of Fact, we ſhall find them inveſted in the Paternal Power; indeed this Author is forced to confeſs

feſs as much, and then I think not upon a Tacit-conſent, or compact, as he would have it, no, the frame of Nature directs us to another foundation. And now I muſt own the Argument has carried me much further than I deſigned, but I think the injuries which theſe Notions offer to the Authority of Civil Governours, as well as Maſters of Families; will dictate an Apology. I have ſtudiouſly avoided all Applications, leſt I ſhould give him a Handle to make uſe of a Common Artifice againſt me, by reſolving my Reſentments into diſloyalty, towards our preſent Sovereign; but this is an Imputation ſo unjuſt, that all that know me are, I queſtion not, ſufficiently prepared to wipe it off: For tho' I cannot entertain ſuch an Opinion of Original Contract, as to be forward to place all my Loyalty upon it, yet I hope there are others as well as my ſelf, can find out principles that will maintain as true fealty and Allegiance, towards his preſent Majeſty, as that can ſuggeſt, or create.

CHAP. XII.

Of the Nature of Moral Good and Evil.

HAving thus laid the Foundations of the Law of Nature, and repreſented it in all its Formalities and Appendages, I proceed in the next place to conſider the nature and diſtinction of Moral Good, and Evil. And firſt, That we may deſcribe the nature of Moral Good with greater clearneſs, it will be requiſite to conſider not only the *Subject Matter*, but the *Formal Reaſons* of it.

§. 1. And firſt, The ſubject Matter of Moral Good undoubtedly ariſes from the natural frame and conſtitution of Things. As things in their Original Nature correſpond, or agree with the Primitive ends, and Intereſts of each other, ſo they carry in them a Natural, or Phyſical goodneſs. Thus in the caſe of Temperance; a moderate uſe of Meats and Drinks, undoubtedly preſerves the Mind, as well as Body in all its ends and uſes? and conſequently it is no doubt, a Natural, or Phyſical good

to

to the whole Man. And this I would call the subject matter of Moral Good; so that all Moral Good being founded in the Original Frame and Constitution of things, it always implies a Physical, or Natural Good in it. But,

§. 2. *Secondly*, For the *formal Reasons* of Moral Good, I conceive they are principally *two*. The *first* is, whereby it seems to be immediately distinguished from a Natural Good; and that is as it proceeds from the choices of a free Agent. And *Secondly*, As these choices are Regulated, according to the Original Frame, Nature, and Order of things Thus in the case of Meats and Drinks, an unthinking Brute may, no doubt, receive such a portion of both, as is exactly accommodated to the Ends and Interests of such an Animal. But yet, since this is done purely by a necessary principle, or natural Instinct, it cannot derive to it self the denomination of a Moral Action; but now when the moderate use of Meats and Drinks is defined upon a mature consideration of the ends and Interests of our beings, and we make 'em the measure of our choices, and embrace 'em as such; the Action ob-

tains a new denomination; for 'tis certainly a Moral Action, and consequently a Moral Good, in as much as it moves upon the measures, and principles of a Natural Good.

It's certain, every action that is founded in rational Motives and Convictions, or that rests on certain Faculties which we are empowered to exert, or not exert in the disquisition of its Nature is to be esteemed a moral action, because the consequences of it are to be imputed to us. And if our choices, and determinations are Regulated according to the true nature of the thing, and the Primitive Ends and Interests of our Beings, it may justly be esteemed a moral Good; but if we choose, and determine contrary to these measures and principles, it will undoubtedly, pass under the character of a moral Evil; so that Moral Good manifestly includes two things, first it must contain all the principles of a free Action. Secondly, The Springs, and Principles of Freedom, are to move in conjunction with the natural Frame, and Interests of the things themselves; and consequently, a Moral Good always presupposes, and includes a Natural Good. I'm sensible there

here are others that are not content with this portion of Moral Good, and therefore they add a third Ingredient, from whence it chiefly takes its denomination. For they define it to be the Conformity of an Action to a Rule, or Decree of a Law-giver; and consequently it includes, first a principle of Freedom; secondly, a Natural Goodness, or an intrinsick Rectitude of the Action in all its relations; and thirdly, the binding Authority of a Law that engages us to embrace it from the Will and Pleasure of a Law-giver. But now if the Authority of a Law-giver, be the true measure of Moral Goodness, it makes a Moral Law, or Duty, and a Moral Good to be the same thing, whereas a Moral Law or Duty seems to be the Complement of a Moral Good. The one is a choice of things from their relation, and consent to Moral ends and purposes; the other, from a binding Authority superadded to them. In Moral Duties, the Law-giver is to prescribe in Conformity to these ends, and the Moral Agent is to choose, and determine himself by them, in Conformity to the Will, and Authority of the Law-giver, but a Moral Good seems to

be

be only the choice of a Natural Good, without considering it as the Command, or Appointment of a Sovereign Authority. But the denominations of things are often Arbitrary, and may be extended or lessened, without any injury to Truth, as long as the Latitude of such denominations is fixed, and agreed upon; and therefore, we ought not to be concerned at any Terms of Art, or Modes of Expression, as long as there's an Agreement in the nature of things.

CHAP. XIII.

Of the true measures of Moral Goodness.

§. 1. IN order to a further display of the nature of Moral Goodness, it will not be improper, nor useless to consider the true measure of Moral Goodness. And first, I think Pleasure, whether of Body or Mind, cannot be any true measure of Moral Goodness. Thus much the Observations already made on a Vitiated Mind abundantly evince.

For

For certainly a Vitiated Mind and Conscience may conceive an undisturbed Satisfaction, and delight in the foulest Enormities; and yet it's absurd to pronounce 'em Moral Goods.

For notwithstanding any pleasure of Mind that accompanies them, they are still to be ranked among Moral Evils. Indeed, I cannot conceive how Pleasure, and Pain can be the measure of Natural Good; for the Mind may certainly lie under wrong apprehensions of things, and consequently, conceive a pleasure, and satisfaction in real Evils; and therefore it seems to be highly improper to pronounce Pleasure, the true, and only measure of Natural, much more of Moral Good. No, certainly the true measure of Natural Good is to be taken from the Original Frame, and Constitution, or ends and interests of things, and the exact Agreement, or Adapting of them to each other, pursuant to it. When things are thus adapted, no doubt, but a true pleasure of Mind results from them, for God has so graciously adapted things to our Welfare and Happiness, and Established such a strict Harmony, and Agreement between us, and every Natural Good

Good that concerns us, that there's a powerful Pleaſure flows from it, at leaſt according to the Original Oeconomy, or Frame of things; but yet Pleaſure ſeems to be a conſequent rather than a meaſure, or conſtituent Principle of Natural Good, eſpecially ſince there may ariſe this Pleaſure of Mind, when the true ends and intereſts of things are perverted, witneſs the caſe of an Erroneous Judgment, or Conſcience; and therefore I think, a late Author has not well expreſſed himſelf, when he tells us, *That things are Good, and Evil, only in Reference to Pleaſure and Pain* [*Eſſay concerning Human Underſtanding*, Cap. 20. Sect. 2.] or as he more fully delivers himſelf in another place, *Good and Evil, are nothing but Pleaſure and Pain, or that which occaſions, or produces Pleaſure, or Pain in us.* Book 2. Cap. 28. Sect. 5.

§. 2. *Secondly*, The conformity of our Actions to a Law abſtracting from the Intrinſick rectitude of the Subject matter of it, cannot be the true meaſure of Moral Good. As the forecited Author too apparently ſuggeſts, when he tells us, *Moral Good and Evil, is only the conformity or diſagreement of our Voluntary Actions*

Actions to some Law; whereby Good and Evil, is drawn on us from the Will and Power of the Law-maker. Lib. 2. Cap. 28.

§. 5. If this definition is designed thus far, certainly the best Argument against such a position is one by this Author advanced on another Occasion. He Labours to prove, that the fouleſt Enormities, have obtained in whole Nations and Societies of Men, upon a Law of Fashion, Opinion or Reputation; but certainly the conformity of an Action, to such a Law, can by no Means give it the Character or Denomination of Moral Good. This must indeed destroy all real Distinction between Good and Evil, and render the moral endowments of the Mind, as Arbitrary and Precarious as the outward Dress of the Body. It's true an Action performed by a voluntary Agent in Conformity to a Rule, is undoubtedly a Moral Action. But it does not hereby necessarily become a Moral Good, unless the Rule be good, or the Intrinsick matter of the Action be so: For without these Limitations it may be as much a Moral Evil, as if it interfered with an Established Rule. So that I cannot but dissent from Mr. *Lock*, when he places the Notion of Moral

Good

Good and Evil, in the conformity or disagreement of a Voluntary Action to a Rule, tho' it be no more than a Rule or Law of Fashion. I grant it Establisheth the Idea of a Moral Action; but a Moral Action is either good or bad, and therefore the Idea of Moral Goodness, cannot rest upon the conformity of an Action to such a Rule, but on the Intrinsick Goodness of the Action or Rectitude of such a Rule.

§. 3. But to proceed; There are others who place the foundation of Moral Good, in the Conformity of Moral Actions, to our Rational Natures, as fitted for Society, and consequently proportion the degrees of Moral Good, as they serve more or less the ends of Society. Indeed it cannot be denyed, but that the Great and Wise God, hath given us a being, and Nature not only peculiarly framed for Society, but to be supported by it; and consequently whatever accords with the Rational Nature of Man born to Society is undoubtly a Moral Good; but 'tis visible Man in his Original Frame, bears a threefold Relation; to wit, Frame in Relation to God, his own Being, and that of his Neigh-

Neighbours; from whence arises a threefold Moral Good. Now the Agreement of Actions to our Rational Natures, as created for Society, may present us with an Idea of those Moral Goods, that respect our Being in it self, or as it stands supported by Society, but it cannot give us an Idea of Moral Good, with respect to God our Creator, and consequently this Notion cannot be an adequate measure of Moral Goodness.

§. 4. Having said thus much Negatively, it remains that we endeavour to State it in a positive way, or determine what is the true and adequate measure of Moral Goodness. And first, it's universally allowed that Moral Good implies a Relation in the Nature of it. It's a good in respect of something else, and consequently there must be some fixed Standard, to examine and state the Proportions it bears to it; and this Standard, may not improperly be called a measure of Moral Goodness. Again, Moral Good, which we are now concerned with, respects the Actions of Men; and since the Actions of Men, with respect to a Threefold Relation, which we bear towards God, our own

Beings

Beings and our fellow Creatures, paſs under three ſeveral Denominations, the meaſure of Moral Good, muſt extend to each of 'em. With Submiſſion, then I preſume the proper meaſure of Moral Good, muſt be taken from the Original Frame, Ends and Intereſts of our Beings; we are acted by invincible propenſions, I mean thoſe of ſelf preſervation and deſire of happineſs, that will engage us to examine and conſider 'em, and the experiment will furniſh us with a meaſure, to determine the Goodneſs of all our actions, in our ſeveral intercourſes with God, our own Beings, or our fellow Creatures. It's certain there can no action be truly Morally Good but what is conformable to our Original Frame, and the prime Ends and Intereſt of our Beings; and whatis really thus conformable, is really and truly Morally Good; and conſequently the Frame, Ends, and Intereſt of our Being, muſt be a proper Standard of Moral Goodneſs. God has been graciouſly pleaſed, to give us a Being like himſelf, the great exemplar of all Perfection and Goodneſs, and he has annexed ſuch Ends and Intereſts to it, as will lay a Foundation for Actions, that

that reſult from his bleſſed Nature; ſo that the whole line of Moral Duty is by the Laws of our Creation, made to conſiſt in Actions that are peculiarly conſonant to our Natural Frame, in all its Capacities and Relations. The Features, and Complexion of every duty, are taken from our ſelves, and by a Phyſical Efficiency, add Glory, Strength and Beauty to us; and therefore nothing can be ſo true a meaſure of Moral Goodneſs, as the pure Frame, Ends, and Intereſts of our Beings. As for thoſe that place Moral Goodneſs, in the conformity of our Actions to a Law; it's certain that the Truth and Authority of this Law, where Revelation is wanting, muſt firſt be tryed by the Frame, Ends, and Intereſts of our Beings: Reaſon can make an eſtimate no other way; and conſequently all other meaſures of Moral Goodneſs, muſt at laſt reſolve into this.

CHAP. XIV.

Of the Eternal and Unalterable diſtinctions of Moral Goodneſs.

FRom what has been laid down and Concluded, it's evident there's an unalterable diſtinction between Good and Evil. Now certainly whereinſoever we fix the Notion of Moral Good, whether 'tis the imbracing of a Natural Good, by Rational motives and convictions ariſing from the Intrinſick Nature of the Thing, the proper Springs of a free Agent; or whether 'tis in purſuance to the Will and Authority of a Lawgiver, it's abundantly concluded, the Lines of Moral Good are fixed and unalterable: For it's manifeſt that Moral Good, always includes a Natural Good, and Natural Good is evidently Eſtabliſhed in the frame of Created Nature, and conſequently if the frame of Nature is unalterable, Moral Good muſt be ſo too. Nay, we may advance further yet; the great creator of all things, tho' in himſelf the moſt abſolute, and free Agent, yet was governed by the dictates

dictates of his own Infinite Wiſdom and Goodneſs, and conſequently the whole frame of created Nature is Eſtabliſhed according to the model of the divine perfections. If therefore Natural Good neceſſarily reſults from the Natural frame of Things; and their ſubſerviency and agreements with each other, and Moral Good neceſſarily includes a Natural Good in it, Moral as well as Natural Goodneſs, is as unalterable as the divine Perfections; and conſequently is in the higheſt ſence eternal, and unalterable. From hence we way obſerve how monſtrouſly abſurd is that poſition advanced by a ſet of Men, who firſt outlived all Moral Good, before they thought of the Notion, that there's no diſtinction between Good and Evil; that all the Impreſſions of the Mind, are to be reſolved into mere Habits Eſtabliſhed in Example, or Education, and conſequently the Good and Evil of all Actions beſides that which reſults from the Determination of poſitive Laws, whether Humane or Divine, is nothing elſe but a Law of Faſhion or Opinion. It's abundantly concluded, God has given us a peculiar Frame, and thereby Eſtabliſhed certain Ends, and Intereſts ſuitable to it:

And conſequently what really accords with the true Ends, and Intereſts of our Being, is that we call a Natural Good, and what directly claſhes and interferes with them, is a Natural Evil. It's concluded God has endued us with powers and faculties that, if duely exerted, will diſcover to us the true Frame, Ends and Intereſts of our Natures, and how all external things affect 'em, and are more or leſs Subſervient to 'em; and after this he has endued us with a power, to chuſe and purſue what is truly Subſervient to theſe ends. The very frame and condition of our Natures, as they are to be ſupported with outward ſuccours and conveniencies, and the ſenſe of pleaſure and pain ſtampt upon our Natures, and the deſire of the one, and ſatisfaction in enjoying it; and the dread of the other, and the uneaſineſs in ſuffering it, are proper and effectual Springs to ſet all our natural Powers on work, and fix 'em on their proper Ends and Objects; and all this proves a moral Capacity, to purſue and embrace that which we call *Moral Good*, and unleſs our Natural Powers and Faculties are regulated by the Laws and Principles of natural Good, it's impoſſible

ble the Action ſhould obtain the Character of moral Good. It muſt be confeſſed, that the biaſs of *Animal* ſenſations, or pleaſures, is ſo impetuous in corrupted nature, that it often hurries us on to the purſuit of every thing that ſtrikes a preſent Reliſh, without conſidering whether it accords with the true Ends and Intereſts of our Beings, at leaſt in that meaſure or manner we ſeek to enjoy them. Again, it's poſſible the Mind, by force of Habit, as well as power of Education, and the Faſhion of a Country, may be ſunk ſo deep into Carnality, and ſo tinged with brutal Enjoyments, as to be not only diſabled from making the leaſt Enquiry into the true Ends and Intereſts of its Being, but to receive an undiſturbed Satisfaction in the practice of 'em, ſo that they may appear as natural as the moſt regulated Acts of Morality, yet this does by no means deſtroy the Foundations of moral Good; for it is nothing elſe but a kind of Spiritual Diſeaſe, and conſequently we may as well ſay there was originally no true Foundations for Health, becauſe the Body is over-run with a Diſeaſe, as deny the Foundations of Morality, becauſe our Native Capa-

cities are habitually Vitiated and Corrupted.

CHAP. XV.

Reflections on Mr. Lock's *Law of Faſhion.*

§. 9. HAving offered thus much upon the Nature and Diſtinction of Moral Goodneſs, I cannot diſmiſs the Argument without beſtowing a few Remarks on the Author of the Eſſay, concerning *Humane Underſtanding*, upon his advancing a Law of Faſhion, or Opinion, among the Rules, or Meaſures, of Moral Goodneſs. I ſhall not conceal what he has ſaid in Vindication of himſelf againſt Mr. *Lowde*, [*See his Ep. to the Reader* Ed. 2.] *I was there not laying down Moral Rules, but ſhewing the Original and Nature of Moral Ideas, and enumerating the Rules Men make uſe of in Moral Relations, whether thoſe Rules were true or falſe.* Now certainly tho' the principal Deſign of this Chapter might be what this Author expreſſes; yet an Impartial Reader could not have believed but there was

a profeſſed Deſign too, to repreſent the true rules, or meaſures, of Moral Good, had he not expreſly declared the contrary. And for all this, I think a man muſt have a great deal of Charity to alter his Belief, notwithſtanding this extorted Declaration. And to juſtify my Opinion, I ſhall appeal to that very Section which he refers to for his Vindication [*Sect.* 4. *Chap.* 28. *B.* 2.] ſpeaking of Moral Duties, or Actions, *viz.* Gratitude, &c. he concludes, *It is not enough to have clear and diſtinct Ideas of them, and to know what Names belong to ſuch and ſuch Combinations of Ideas, as make up the complex Idea belonging to ſuch a Name, we have a further and greater Concernment, and that is to know whether ſuch Actions ſo made up are morally Good, or Bad.* Now, truly if the great concernment be to know or diſcover whether certain Actions are Morally Good or Bad, the true Nature of Moral Good muſt be fixed; for if it be not material, whether the *Rule or Meaſure be true or falſe*; I would fain know what Light we have given of Moral Good, or how we ſhall judge whether any particular action *is Morally Good or Bad.* Thus far there's a deſign to fix the true meaſures

ſures of Moral Goodneſs, and we are the more induced to believe it, becauſe the very next Section preſents us with a profeſſed deſcription of *Morally Good and Evil*, purſuant *to the deſcription he* had before given of Good and Evil. *Morally Good and Evil then is* only *the Conformity or Diſagreement of our Voluntary Actions to* ſome *Law*; *whereby Good and Evil is drawn upon us, from the Will and Power of the Law-maker.* Here's a ſtanding definition of Moral Good and Evil, and this Author muſt own that a definition of Things, (ſuch as Good and Evil) is a diſcovery of the preciſe Nature of 'em, as they are in themſelves, and conſequently it muſt imply a diſcovery of the true meaſures *of Morally Good and Bad.* To proceed then, the Nature of Morally Good and Bad, is here made to conſiſt in the conformity of Voluntary Actions to ſome Law, and therefore it's requiſite an Account ſhould be given of the ſeveral Rules or Laws of Moral Goodneſs, whereby we may view it in its ſeveral Species or kinds. This Mr. *Lock* performs in the Section immediately following. *Of theſe Moral Rules and Laws to which Men generally Refer, and by which they judge of the Rectitude or Pravity of*

their

their Actions there, ſeems to me to be three ſorts, with their different Enforcements or Rewards and Puniſhments, ſo that we ſee he induſtriouſly repreſents 'em in all the formalities of Laws, and gives 'em their proper and peculiar Sanctions, that they may obtain the Authority and Character of Laws. Upon this, he proceeds to eſtabliſh the ſeveral Species of Moral Good; and having enlarged very much upon the third Species of Moral Good, that of Virtue and Vice, he gives us to underſtand his Intentions by the very Title of his Thirteenth Section. *Theſe three Laws are Rules of Moral Good and Evil*, and Sect 14. he expreſly tells us, *That by taking the Rule from the Faſhion of the Country, the Mind hath a notion of Moral Goodneſs or Evil, which is the conformity, or not conformity, of any action to that Rule.* Now what is all this, but to deſcribe the real Nature of Moral Goodneſs in its true meaſures, as well as kinds. It's evident, it was the Buſineſs of *Sect.* 5. and the reſt Branches from it by the Laws of method and order; nay, it's expreſſed in the very Concluſion, *Sect.* 14. and therefore we cannot (without robbing Mr. *Lock* of the Cha-

Character he has juſtly merited of being a Maſter of Reaſon) but conclude, that all this was in purſuance to his *Great Concernment*, Sect. 4. *That is, to know whether ſuch actions ſo made up, are morally Good or Bad.* But further to take off all this, Mr. *Lock* appeals to *Sect.* 15. 20. Whereas the latter only affirms, that we have a notion of Moral Relation, whether the Rule be true or falſe; and this I think no body can deny, but yet I hope I have proved, that the notion of all Moral Goodneſs, depends on the truth of the Rule, not on the conformity of an Action, to a Rule, whether true or falſe. The former affirms, that the Idea, or Notion, of Moral Goodneſs, ariſes from the conformity of an Action to one of his three Rules, but I hope, I have proved that they only repreſent the Idea of a Moral Action, not of Moral Goodneſs, which indiſpenſibly requires the truth and goodneſs of the Rule. Laſtly, in vindication of himſelf, he produces his own Authorities for the eternal and unalterable nature of Virtue, by fixing it in the Will or Commands of God, *Book* 1. *Chap.* 3. *Sect.* 6. and 18. But yet we were at a loſs, to know whether he

he deſigned the revealed Will and poſitive Commands of God, or his Will diſcovered by the Light of Reaſon, had he not told us in a ſecond Edition, *That by the Divine Law, he meant as well a Law promulged by the Light of Reaſon, as the voice of Revelation*, Book 2. Chap. 28. Sect. 8. If the Commands or Will of God are only thoſe we receive from Revelation, or the poſitive Will of God (the firſt Edition of this Eſſay, ſuggeſting nothing to the contrary) then Moral Good and evil Antecedent to Revelation, is not Eternal and Unalterable, but may be founded on a Law of faſhion, as a true meaſure of Moral Good; for as this Author obſerves, the natural conveniences, and inconveniences of things themſelves, may determine our choices, without making 'em the inviolable Rules of Practice. *See Sect.* 6. *Book* 1. *Chap.* 3. and *Sect.* 6. 2. *Chap.* 28. So that however, his ſecond Thoughts ſtand affected, I can ſee nothing in his firſt, to induce a belief that he did not intend to ſtate the ſeveral meaſures of Moral Goodneſs, and conſequently aſſign a Law of opinion for one of them. I have hitherto aſſerted nothing, but from Arguments which

Mr.

Mr. *Lock*'s own Words have furniſhed me with; and if I have carried him beyond his Intentions, I'm perſwaded the remarks are juſtifiable, whilſt the old expreſſions remain to propagate the Infection, at leaſt in every incautious Reader, that has not peruſed his Preface; for certainly, ſince in the entrance of this Eſſay, he has brought the foulеſt Enormities, under the Character of a Law of Faſhion or Opinion, *Book* 1. *Chap.* 3. *Sect.* 9, 10, 11. he either ought to have cancelled moſt of thoſe paſſages I have cited, or at leaſt expreſly declared, that a Law of Opinion was never to be admitted a meaſure of Moral Good, unleſs the Opinion is exactly conſonant to truth, or the nature of things; nor a rule of Action, but as it correſponds with the Law of Nature, or revealed Religion.

§. 2. Having ſaid thus much, give me leave to offer ſomething concerning the neceſſity of advancing ſuch a Law. Now certainly, in order to the Deſcription of Moral Goodneſs, or the ſeveral Branches of it, there's not the leaſt neceſſity, for bringing a Law of Faſhion into the Liſt. I hope, I may with-

without Arrogance or Preſumption, conclude from what has been already offered, that Moral Goodneſs is indiſputably founded on the Truth or Goodneſs of the Rule, or the intrinſick Goodneſs of the things themſelves; and that neither the Sentiments or Opinions of Men, nor the Faſhion of a Country without theſe Requiſites, can give 'em ſo much as the bare Denominations of Moral Goodneſs; and therefore that a Law of Faſhion, ſhould be advanced as a Rule, to repreſent the Nature of Moral Goodneſs, can never be fairly accounted for. It's certain the Law of Nature, or at leaſt the Law of Revelation in conjunction with it, is the only meaſure of Moral Goodneſs: Inſomuch, that a Law of Faſhion interfering with one or both of 'em, is not only deſtitute of every grain of Moral Goodneſs, but cannot cancel one grain of ſin or guilt, when followed in oppoſition to either. This is the caſe of Duels, or any other faſhionable Enormities; for Laws of Nature, as well as revealed Laws, when duly promulged, are juſtly preſumed to be the known fundamental Rules of Humane Actions, and the faſhion or publick reputation of an Action, can

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add nothing towards its innocence. And therefore what neceſſity is there for inſerting a Law of Faſhion amongthe Rules or Meaſures of Moral Goodneſs, unleſs it were deſigned to eſtabliſh ſomething of Credit or Authority to it; things no ſooner ſuggeſted, than embraced in an Age of Liberty; and therefore this Author ſhould no ſooner have mentioned ſuch a Rule, than repreſented the unwarrantableneſs of it. In a word, this Author might have conſidered, that he had given the groſſeſt immortalities, the Authority of Laws of Faſhion, and conſequently, that ſuch Laws are very unfit repreſentatives of the Ideas of Moral Goodneſs, certainly it had been as allowable, and neceſſary, to have brought an avowed Immorality into the Liſt, given it the Character and Authority of a Law, and pronounced it *a meaſure of Virtue, or Moral Rectitude, or Goodneſs, or at leaſt a Branch of it.* But truly, this is a method that rather confounds, than eſtabliſhes the Ideas of Moral Goodneſs, or inſtructs us *to know whether ſuch Actions ſo made up, are morally Good or Bad.* Indeed, had he condeſcended to an old Diſtinction of Good and Evil, and pronounced Moral Good or Evil, either

either apparent or real, and Vertue and Vice reputed or real, then he had put himself under a necessity of enlarging very plentifully upon a Law of Fashion, and abundantly freed himself from Censure and Reflection, especially, upon an express Declaration of the unwarrantableness of such a Law, when destitute of real intrinsick Goodness or Innocence; but till this is done, I hope, 'tis no crime to pronounce Mr. *Lock*'s Law of Fashion (as it now stands Recorded) both dangerous and unnecessary.

§. 3. But further, besides the danger and frivolousness of the attempt, this Author seems to have grosly mis-represented the old received Notions of Virtue and Vice, brought disgrace upon the Ancient Moralists or Philosophers, and established a Law upon sanctions peculiar to it, that were never esteemed so. And first, it cannot be denied, but that Custom and Example have always been very prevailing Arguments, to influence the Judgments, as well as practice of Mankind, and when Practice is not only universal, but pursued, abetted, and encouraged by Authority, it will presently be

be received into the Judgments of Men, as an indisputable Rule of Action, and when 'tis thus received, it becomes a Law or Rule of Action, and thus Custom and Example accidentally contribute to the establishing a Rule, as they gradually new model the Judgment, and serve to create a real perswasion of the intrinsick goodness of any particular Action; but yet I can scarce believe that Custom, publick Reputation, or the Fashion of a Countrey, were ever assigned by the intelligent part of Mankind, for the measure of the Rectitude of a Rule, much less for a true and proper Rule of Action; no, an Opinion of the Intrinsick Rectitude of things has been ingendered by Habit or Custom, and the fashionable practices of an Age, and then the Action has been pursued and embraced with as much Heat and Eagerness, as if it were endued with an Intrinsick Goodness, and were to be ranked under the Title of Moral Goodness. And therefore, this Author, has offered Violence to the notions of Mankind, and particularly of the Ancient Moralists and Philosophers, in pronouncing the Fashion of a Countrey to be a Law, and founding

Virtue

Virtue and Vice upon it. For firſt it can be no Law on this Author's own principles, ſince it wants a peculiar Sanction to enforce it. It's well known, Praiſe, Honour, or Reputation, is by no means peculiar to a Law of Faſhion, for 'tis the reward that attends all ſorts of Moral Goodneſs, or a Collateral Motive contrived by divine deſignation to enforce the practice of it. 2dly, Vertue and Vice among the Learned, was never meaſured by the Reputation it bears in the World, but by an Intrinſick Moral Rectitude. This I could evince were it neceſſary, from the whole tribe of Heathen Moraliſts, who always fixed the Notion in its Agreements, with the dictates of right Reaſon, and the Original Frame, Ends, and Intereſts of our Natures. I ſhall at this time content my ſelf with ſome Authorities, from that Learned Moraliſt he has cited to ſupport his own Opinion. Thus he agrees to theſe great Truths in a Multitude of paſſages: *Virtutis hoc proprium, earum rerum quæ ſecundum Naturam ſunt, habere delectum.* Lib. 3. *de Fin.* Sect. 4. *Quæſita enim virtus eſt, non quæ relinqueret naturam, ſed quæ tueretur*, Ib. Lib. 4. §. 15. *In homine Summa omnis Animi eſt, & in Animo Rationis,*

tionis, ex qua virtus eſt, quæ Rationis Abſolutio definitur. Ib. Lib. 5. §. 14. *Virtus eadem in homine ac Deo eſt, —eſt autem Virtus nihil aliud quam perfecta & ad Summum perducta natura; eſt igitur homini cum Deo ſimilitudo.* Lib. *de Leg.* §. 8. So that Vertue was never eſteemed that precarious Thing this Author has Suggeſted; the publick Reputation of any Action was never the meaſure of Vertue, but Right Reaſon, and the Frame, Ends and Intereſts of our Beings, elſe it's impoſſible Vertue in Men, ſhould be the ſame with Vertue in God, and Men to reſemble God in it, as this Author excellently expreſſes himſelf.

From all this it's manifeſt, that Vertue was rather eſteemed the Standard or Meaſure of Praiſe, than Praiſe of Vertue, and that Honour or Praiſe, was never extolled or appealed to, but as it is the Product of Vertue, and a kind of reward to it. Thus much this Author could not be Ignorant of, when the Moraliſt explains the very paſſage he has cited almoſt with the ſame Breath; and makes it a deſcription of the chiefeſt Humane Good, that conſiſts in Vertue or is attained by it. *Quod ipſum ſit optandum per ſe, à Virtute*

profectum

profectum vel in ipſâ virtute ſitum, ſuâ ſponte laudabile. Tuſc. *Quæſt.* lib. 2. §. 20. If this will not content him, I ſhall refer him to another paſſage that ſpeaks out what I have already aſſerted, and will inſtruct him that Vertue is the Meaſure of Praiſe, not Praiſe of Vertue. *Omnis honos, omnis admiratio, omne ſtudium ad virtutem, & ad eas actiones quæ virtuti ſunt conſentaneæ, refertur: Eaque omnia quæ aut ita in animis ſunt, aut ita geruntur, uno nomine honeſta dicuntur.* Lib. 5 *de Fin.* §. 21. This, if I miſtake not, is to define Honour by Vertue, not Vertue by Honour or Reputation, as Mr. *Lock* would have it. Upon the whole then I preſume, it appears that this Law of Opinion, has no more foundation in the received principles of Morality, than there's neceſſity for the invention; that it practiſes as much injuſtice, upon the ancient Advocates for Morality, as it diſcovers Impertinence or Evil deſign in the Author, and in a Word, it's ſo miſerably deſtitute of Solid Argument, or Principle to ſupport it, that nothing but the faſhionable Immoralities of a degenerate Age, can aſſert its truth or Authority.

CHAP. XVI.

Of the Nature of Conſcience in General.

I Shall not much enlarge on the Notion of Conſcience, which imports the knowledge of the Line of Duty, and a directing Power or Faculty, to conſider the Nature of thoſe Actions we are about to execute, by applying 'em to the Line of Duty. This is a truth ſo well known, that no one can diſpute it, that allows the uſe of Reaſon, or make us creatures that can act by a Law, or are capable of being Governed by it. The principal enquiry then is concerning Conſcience with reſpect to paſt Actions: And firſt it's a truth, I preſume, univerſally agreed upon, that Man is endued with a Power of Retaining, and reflecting on his own actions; The retentive Faculty is abundantly maintained upon the Power of Memory, and the Power of Reflection is founded in the very Power of Reaſon. For to Reflect and Animadvert upon our thoughts, is undoubtedly an Act of Reaſon, and Thought. And therefore

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as Man acts upon Thought, Deliberation, and Argument, he cannot but be conſcious that he thinks, deliberates, and argues, and conſequently that he acts purſuant to it. Indeed, I preſume, to think, deliberate, and Act, and to conſider or know that we think, deliberate, or act thus and thus, are two diſtinct acts of the Mind; but whether we think, and deliberate, and reflect upon our Thoughts in the ſame, or different Moments, is no way prejudicial to the Doctrine of Conſciouſneſs. To proceed then as we can reflect, ſo we can animadvert upon the nature of paſt Actions; for thoſe very faculties that enable us to deliberate, and judge of the Nature of an Action, before it is executed, will enable us to paſs as clear, if not much better judgment upon it, after 'tis over: For then we view it in all its Aſpects, Circumſtantials, and Appendages. Now certainly Conſcience contains both theſe Powers in it; I mean a Power of Recollecting and a Power of Animadverting on the Nature of our paſt Actions; for without ſuch inſpecting Powers, it's impoſſible there can be any ſuch thing as Conſcience. But then that which gives us the principal and

formal Notion of Conſcience, is a Power of trying the Nature of our Actions, by ſome Law or Rule of Action. Whatever the Nature of Moral Good and Evil may be; I mean whether it conſiſts in the conformity of our Actions to a Law or Rule, or their diſagreement from it, certain I am the Acts or Powers of Conſcience imply the examination of an Action with reference to a Law or indiſpenſable Rule of Action; whereby it carries the appearance of a Duty or not a Duty. For Conſcience undoubtedly implies a Condemning and abſolving Faculty in it, and theſe are exerciſed with reſpect to Duty, and Duty ariſes from the Obligation of a Law: So that Conſcience is undoubtedly the meaſure of our Actions by a Law. Indeed, this is ſo much the formal Notion of Conſcience, that it runs thro' all the inſtances, and exercitations of Conſciences; for they are no otherwiſe diſtinguiſhed than by the different Laws that Regulate them, as from a Law of Nature, Law of Revelation, or Civil Polity. But then in order to the paſſing an Abſolution or Cenſure on our Actions, and our ſelves for them by a Rule, there muſt be a Power of Acting Conformable

formable to this Law or Rule; for without this, the Action with its Effects and Conſequences, cannot be imputed to us. This is implyed in the very notion of a Law, being a Rule propoſed to Rational Creatures that have a Power to Act, or not Act on Rational Motives, and Convictions; ſo that Conſcience contains a great many different movements, or workings in it. *Firſt*, A Power of Retaining. *Secondly*, A Power of Animadverting, or Reflecting on paſt Actions. *Thirdly*, A Power of applying, and comparing them with a Law or Rule. *Fourthly*, A Power of diſcerning the Truth, Goodneſs, or Equity of the Rule, *Fifthly*, The Obligation and Authority of it; and *Laſtly*, A Power of aſcribing the Action to our ſelves, by acknowledging a Power of Acting in Conformity to this Rule; whereby the Good, or Evil, Guilt or Merit of the Action may be ſome way imputed to us. So that Conſcience may be juſtly defined to be the Judgment we paſs upon our own Actions, whether paſt, or preſent, as ſcanned and meaſured by a Law. But now, tho' a Law in general is aſſigned for the meaſure of Conſcience, it can-

not be imagined that every thing we fanſie, or are pleaſed to aſſign for the mark, or ſcope of our Actions, muſt paſs for the true Law, or Meaſure of Conſcience. It's certain, Cuſtom, Education, Example, or the Reputation of an Action gained by Numbers, and a Looſe, Degenerous Age, cannot be a Law, or Meaſure of Conſcience. No, the Paſſions, Prejudices, or By-intereſts of particular Perſons, the Superſtitious Fears, Enthuſiaſm, or Diabolical Suggeſtions of too many, may as well challenge the Character of Laws, as any that have yet been mentioned. But to determine this matter in a few words. If we enquire into the true meaſure of Conſcience, according to its Original Frame; it's certain, the Law of God, whether Natural, or Reveal'd, is to be eſteemed the only proper meaſure. For none but a Sovereign Creator can be the Lord of Conſcience, all other Powers, and Authorities, being only ſpecial Deputations from him; and that Duty, and Obligation that reſults from their Laws, reſt upon a Divine Deputation that gives being to their Character, as well as Authority.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVII.

Reflections on Mr. Lock's *Deſcription of Conſcience.*

THE Nature of Conſcience being thus ſtated, I cannot but reflect a little on Mr. *Lock*'s Account of Conſcience, when he tells us, *That it is nothing elſe but our own Opinion of our own Actions, and this Opinion founded in a Perſwaſion, however got, as from Education, Company, or the Cuſtoms of a Country. See Lib.* 1. *Chap.* 3. §. 8. This, to ſpeak the leaſt, I think, is a very looſe, and imperfect Definition of Conſcience. And to ſay, *'Tis nothing elſe but an Opinion however got*; ſeems to Suggeſt, as if God had Inſtituted no fixed Rule of Conſcience, but that it is to be reſolved into little elſe but Cuſtom, Company, and Education. In a word, it's a Deſcription calculated, purely for an Erroneous Conſcience, that has no other Foundation but preſent Convictions, whether true or falſe. I will not deny, but that an erroneous, vitia-

vitiated Conſcience, is in a large ſence, ſtiled Conſcience, and that Cuſtom, or Education may give being to ſuch a Conſcience; but then it's in Scripture diſtinguiſhed by the Denominations of *a weak*, or *defiled Conſcience*. I will grant, that it is a meaſure of Action to thoſe that labour under it; becauſe, as God has formed us Reaſonable Creatures, we are to Act upon Rational Motives, and Convictions. He has given us no other meaſure of Action as Men, and therefore the preſent Light, or Convictions we are under, are the immediate Springs, and Principles of Action: for to Act Blindfold, or without Reaſon, or in contradiction to it, muſt overturn the Frame of our Beings, and the Practice of all Moral Vertue. But yet God has ſet a ſufficient mark upon an erroneous Conſcience, by charging Sin on the Error, where-ever a Man can be charged with Neglect as to the means of Information. On this Account St. *Paul* aſſures us, that the *impure*, or thoſe that are under an erroneous Conſcience, are *Polluted as well in Mind, as Conſcience*. *Tit.* 1, 15. So that an erroneous Conſcience being never a direct Rule, at leaſt not any of God's Forming; nay, being

being a Rule occaſioned by our ſelves, that enhances our Guilt, rather than Merit; it is not but in a very improper and extended Sence to paſs under the Denomination of Conſcience, at leaſt, without ſome diſtinguiſhing Characteriſtick annexed, that the Divine Oeconomy of Conſcience may not ſuffer by it. I am ſure it is Conſcience founded on the true Law, or Rule of Conſcience, according to the Divine Eſtabliſhment of it, that this Author ſhould have Animadverted on, as a proof of Innate Ideas, not a Fictitious Conſcience: And certainly it is a very imperfect account of ſuch a Conſcience, to affirm, that in the true, and proper Sence of it, it is nothing but our own Opinion of our own Actions, tho got by Cuſtom, Company, or Education; certainly the Foundation of Conſcience ought not to have been omitted, which ariſes from the Conformity of our Actions to the proper Rule, or Law of Conſcience, the Law of God.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVIII.

Of the Foundation, and Authority of Natural Conſcience in the original Oeconomy of it.

HAving offered thus much concerning the Nature of Conſcience, we may eaſily repreſent the Foundation, and Authority of natural Conſcience. By Natural Conſcience, I mean a Conſcience that exerts it ſelf in a State of Nature antecedent to a State of Revelation. And certainly there's a Conſcience Eſtabliſhed by God upon an unalterable Foundation, even in this State. For it's already concluded, that Man in his Original Frame is capable of Acting by certain Eſtabliſhed Rules; It's concluded, that theſe Rules are diſcovered to him, as the ſpecial Inſtitution of God, binding them upon him as his proper Laws, and indiſpenſible Meaſures of Action; It's concluded, that God has Created him with a Power of applying all his Actions to a Rule, and a Power of Judging whether his Actions accord with, or deviate from this Rule, and

and a Power of adjudging himſelf accountable to God, for the violation of this Rule, and conſequently a neceſſity of acquitting or condemning himſelf by this Rule. In a Word, it's concluded that theſe Rules are eternal, and unalterable, being founded in the Original Frame, Ends and Intereſts of Created Nature; therefore ſince theſe are Truths eſtabliſhed upon the cleareſt Evidence, and Convictions, there's a natural Conſcience reſulting from the Frame of our Beings, and founded upon the moſt uniform, and unalterable Meaſures and Principles. It's viſible God has framed us as exquiſitely apprehenſive of the violation of the Line of Duty, and of being accountable to him for it, as ſenſible of Torment and Miſery; So that the workings of Conſcience can never be deſtroyed; they will unavoidably break in upon us at one time or other, and fill us with Horror and Confuſion. Tho' it cannot be denied, but that Habit, and Cuſtom may engender a falſe Light, or Senſe of Things; and conſequently a falſe conſcience, either by miſtaking the Nature, and Compoſition of our Actions, or the Rules of 'em; by making a falſe application, or a falſe

Rule;

Rule; yet it's concluded there's a Conſcience Eſtabliſhed in the Original Frame or Nature of Things, and tho' it may for ſome time be ſuppreſſed or ſtifled, yet we can never ſecure it from returning upon us.

CHAP. XIX.

The Truth and certainty of Conſcience Demonſtrated againſt the Latitudinarian and Unbeliever.

NOw certainly if what has been already aſſerted carries force and evidence in it, there needs nothing more to diſcover the falſehood, not to ſay Senſeleſs Impudence of a prevailing poſition, That *Conſcience is nothing elſe but certain Superſtitious Fears, contracted and rivetted by the Power of Education*; for it's viſible the Laws of Conſcience are an Inſtitution of God himſelf, as certain and unalterable, as the diſtinctions of Good and Evil; nay as certain and unalterable, as the Frame, and Order of Nature. It's true there is one thing

thing which the Libertine may retreat to, to blaſt or diſparage the Truth and Reality of Conſcience. I mean the inconſiſtence and contradiction of Erroneous vitiated Conſciences. For ſince Conſcience ſometimes as viſibly diſcovers it ſelf in the eſpouſal and defence of open Immoralities, as the ſtricteſt vertues; and of palpable Falſhoods and Errors, as the cleareſt Truths; it's with ſome colour concluded that Conſcience is only the Effects of Habit, Cuſtom and Education, Working the Mind up to certain Superſtitious Sentiments and Opinions. But certainly the miſtake is obvious, for this is an Argument that in reality proves no more, than that the mind is capable of receiving falſe Notions of Things, and eſpouſing 'em as real Truths, and unqueſtionable Rules of Action. If this be admitted there's no neceſſity for diſcarding the Divine Oeconomy or Inſtitution of Natural Conſcience, unleſs we muſt deny or reject every Divine Ordinance, becauſe it was not eſtabliſhed above the Poſſibility of violence, or diſtortion. It may eaſily be granted that the Mind or Underſtanding may be warped, or moulded to the reception of very abſurd Opinions and

Notions;

Notions; there are a great many concurring causes that conspire to the implanting such habits; there are vitious appetites and propensions that carry a fatal bias over all our Motions or Actions; there are examples and the fashion of an Age, which (once falling in with Native vitious propensions) will turn the Scale against the clearest Arguments and Convictions; so as to enforce a Practice contrary to received Sentiments and Opinions; and Practice engenders into habit, and at the same time Establisheth a Powerful Familiarity; and Familiarity takes off the unnaturalness or incongruity of Things, and by tract of time represents 'em to the Mind, as highly agreeable and innocent; so that it's possible a cultivated mind may be totally Debauched and Corrupted, that a pure Conscience may become defiled, and a regulated judgment perverted: The Force of habit may reconcile contradictions; the exorbitance of Lusts may send forth such Vapours as will suffocate not only the natural but improved light of the understanding: But the case of uncultivated Nations is highly convincing, where enormities become the Subject of Education, and

are

are infuſed as Rules of Action from the very firſt dawnings of Reaſon. Native luſt, and irregular appetites may do much to cramp and fetter the Mind, or Reaſon, to that degree as to ſuppreſs all Solemn enquiries into the nature of Things; and conſequently oblige her to determine according to the Suggeſtions and Impulſe of ſenſe; but when vitious propenſions, and parental inſtructions are mixed and twiſted in with each other, and a People neither ſee nor hear of any thing but the depravities of Nature, no wonder if a Judgment or Conſcience purſuant to it is eſtabliſhed (at leaſt while Luſt keeps the Aſcendant) and that too as reſolute and inflexible, as the moſt pure and regulated Conſcience. I muſt confeſs it's a received Maxim among the Schools, that in Actions that are *de primo dictamine naturæ*, the Conſcience cannot err, but is always correct and regular, and on this account it was pronounced *Habitus naturalis & innatus*. But I can diſcover no juſt foundation for this aſſertion, eſpecially ſince Scripture, as well as Experience, ſeems to warrant the contrary; for St. *Paul* dictates no leſs, when he deſcribes the ſtate of the

Heathen World, *Having the Understanding darkned, being alienated from the Life of God thro' the Ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart, who being past feeling have given 'emselves over to work all uncleanness with greediness.* But now after all this, tho' the Original Laws of Conscience may be thus shamefully subverted, and a false Conscience frequently erected in the room of that which God has instituted, yet it is abundantly demonstrated it rests upon immutable foundations. There's a Conscience which has neither Custom, nor Education, for its Creator, but that God that made the Heavens; it's founded in the immutable counsels of infinite Wisdom, and has the same frame and establishment with Nature it self. Let the *Latitudinarian* consider this, and every mouth shall be stopped. Let him consider, that as 'tis perfect demonstration that God has established an unalterable Oeconomy of Conscience, so he'll be infinitely concerned to assert the Power and Authority of it; and tho' the exorbitance of his Lusts have bribed his Judgment, and buoyed him up into a Perswasion, that Conscience is a mere *Chimæra*, or State,

or Church-Engine, to reduce the multitude to a ſervile Obedience; and, in a word, tho' the Power and Authority of this perſwaſion has carried him on to the moſt execrable Impieties without reluctancy, or remorſe; yet he may aſſure himſelf that the Divine Oeconomy of Conſcience will one day be reſtored, and tho' want of means of Information (where there's room for a juſt Plea of this nature) may ſilence the loud cries of it, yet he may aſſure himſelf it will exert in proportion to every neglect of means with all imaginable vigour and fury, upon every unrepenting Sinner, and then he'll find thoſe ſuperſtitious empty Fears will prove real Accuſations, to condemn him to an irrevocable ſtate of Miſery.

CHAP. XX.

The uneasiness of Mind under Sickness, and the approaches of Death, resolved into the Gripes and Convulsions of Conscience.

HAving thus discovered the primitive Oeconomy of Natural Conscience, it gives us an opportunity to account for those Insults, those Gripes, and Convulsions it makes upon the dissolute at the approach of death, or in time of Sickness. I'm sensible that in endeavouring to assert a despised Notion, that has been often resolved into a mere dejection of Spirits, an *Hypochondriacal flatus*, or certain superstitious unreasonable fears impressed by the force of education. These are indeed very plausible colours and suggestions, to a mind that is steeped and impregnated with the over-flowings of Lust. But before this opinion can obtain credit and admission, the Authors of it are indispensibly obliged to prove, that God has not Originally established a Conscience upon certain unalterable measures,

sures, and principles. But instead of this, it has already been sufficiently demonstrated, that Conscience hath the same Foundation, and Original with that of our Beings. It had its Birth, and Authority in the same Act, that made us reasonable Creatures, and free Agents; and therefore if upon a review of past Actions; Remonstrances arise by comparing 'em with a Rule that answers the true Ends and Interests of our Beings, all the reason in the World, will oblige us to conclude, that they are nothing but the returns of Natural Conscience. What tho' a contrary Conscience was Erected, acting upon the strongest Perswasions, or Convictions, yet it must now be allowed, that it is founded in Violence, and consequently the Mind is under a possibility of returning to right notices, and apprehensions. And certainly the present case affords the highest probabilities for the truth of the supposition. For first it must be confessed whilst Lust and exorbitant Appetites maintain their Ground, a biassed Judgment at least cannot escape being chained to their Interest, but these seem to depend upon the Health and Vigour of the Animal part. As

this is ſhocked, or enervated, whether thro' Age or ſickneſs, ſo theſe muſt decline and ſuffer Diſgrace. And therefore as the heat of Luſt expires, ſo the Judgment or Underſtanding will in proportion be diſcharged from her Fetters, ſhe will view things with a new aſpect, not thro' the Steams of Luſt, and as it were thro' a Glaſs darkly, but Face to Face, and in their naked Shapes and Features, and conſequently our Reflections on paſt Actions will be formed upon new Meaſures and Principles, ſhe'll be able to diſcern the true Ends and Intereſts of Humane Nature, and thereupon bring all her Actions to the Teſt of this Rule; and this cannot fail to beget new Perſwaſions and Convictions, according to the primitive Oeconomy of Conſcience; ſo that it is not a fit of Melancholy, the effect of depauperated Spirits, no otherwiſe than a an expiring Vapour is the cauſe of Light, which before it obſtructed; but the returns of Natural Conſcience acted upon a right Baſis, and exerting it ſelf according to that frame in which it was created. Thus much the *Latitudinarian* may diſcern from the Natural efficacy of Things. But beſides all this he may very

very well allow this wonderful change, to be in some measure compleated, by the concurrence of supernatural causes. If God upon a long train of unrelenting impiety, has at last consigned a Man over to irretrievable destruction, I would fain know why he may not suffer the Devil, or some of his Spiritual Crew, to display before his Mind a Scheme of his past Actions. No one can question but that Order of Spirits can converse with Spirits, or make their applications to a Spiritual Being, and consequently that he can, if permitted, excite such Motions, and suggest such Ideas, as will revive the most considerable minutes of our whole Lives, and enable us to bring 'em to a new Test, and view 'em in their proper Lineaments and proportions; and consequently as they appear to clash with the Line of Duty, plunge a Soul into the most direful Agonies and Convulsions. This is but a kind of Anticipation of that future misery, which I'm confident he will be the Instrument to enhance upon all Reprobate Sinners. But on the other hand, if the patience and long-suffering of God, extends to the leading a Soul to repentance, who can dispute the Divine Influences of the

Holy Spirit, in bringing all past Actions to our remembrance. He can discover such minute circumstances as will recover lost Ideas. He can excite such Meditations and Thoughts, as will suggest the true Rule of Action, and Line of Duty, and consequently such as will necessitate the Mind to pass Sentence on every Action pursuant to it. It's an Undisputed Truth that the Holy Spirit can move and excite the Powers of the Soul by a spiritual kind of Converse, as effectually as the Rhetorick and perswasives of fellow Creatures, that must be Transmitted by Sounds thro' material Organs and Vehicles. This is an Assertion so clear and indisputable, that I can see no reason why those ministring Spirits, the blessed Angels by the divine Appointment, may not be allowed capable of maintaining Intercourses of this nature, even with this lower World, since it only places their Power upon a level with accursed Spirits, who have on all hands a Power attributed to 'em, of influencing the Souls as well as Bodies of Men. And certainly God, whose infinite Knowledge and Wisdom enables him to adapt all his divine Succours to suitable Seasons

and

and Opportunities, could not exert 'em better, than when the Animal Part is disabled by Age, Sickness, or other humane Calamities. And certainly its highly agreeable to the divine Wisdom, when a Change of Mind and Conscience is wrought, to give 'em a deep sense of their Folly and Error, and consequently to throw 'em into the severest Agonies and Convulsions, before he raises 'em up by his special Restoratives, the *refreshings of the Lord*. And now certainly we have foundation enough to answer for the Contradictions of Conscience, and at the same time assert the Divine Oeconomy of it. This is an Hypothesis cannot be disputed in a state of Revelation: And tho' in a state of Nature God has not covenanted to govern Mankind by spiritual Succours, or the Effusions of his Holy Spirit on the hearts of Men, yet I do not find he has any where bound himself to the contrary; and its highly probable his infinite Goodness and Wisdom may sometime incline him to dispense his Favours on this part of his Off-spring; and consequently contribute to the Establishment of Conscience upon its true foundation, I mean according to the primitive Model and Oeconomy of it.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXI.

Of the Evidence of future Rewards, and Punishments from the Passages of Natural Conscience.

THat Mankind was Originally Formed, and Created under the Conduct of a Law, and that Rewards, and Punishments are ascertained to the Observance, or Violation of this Law, has already been proved beyond any just colour of Dispute. That which remains, is to fix the Stage where this great Scene shall be displayed, and a Formal Distribution Transacted. Now I am perswaded it will be easily granted, that Rewards, and Punishments cannot well be Executed in this State of Life. For first, the Established Coercive Powers of this World can by no means pretend to it; they can determine nothing beyond the Surface, or External parts of the Action. And these must be handed to them upon the evidence of Senses, the Authority of Circumstances, and the Veracity of Men, and Sinners; so that very often, the Innocent is Sentenced

tenced to Act his Part in Sufferings, in the room of the Guilty. By this means, the ſubſtantial parts of the Action lie Dormant, and eſcape the moſt ſubtle Remarks, and Cenſures of Mankind; ſo that there may be a Thouſand *whited Sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead Mens Bones, and of all uncleanneſs.* But this is not all, for muſt we not admit a vaſt Scroul of Enormities, that the niceſt obſervations can never pretend to reach, or fathom; ſome that are ſheltered by Studied Retreats, and Privacies, others by paſſing no further than Thought, or Intention, and the inward Workings of the Mind, ſo that it's impoſſible that any thing leſs than an infinite Power, or *a Searcher of Hearts and Reins*, can pretend to ſtate the Deſervings of Men, and adjuſt an Allotment of Rewards and Puniſhments in proportion to them, Indeed, an All-wiſe Creator, that *knoweth the very Thoughts long before*, is abundantly qualified to finiſh his Diſpenſations of this kind, even in this Life. But yet in Crimes that are Publick, and Notorious, we ſometimes ſee the Authors paſs off the Stage of the World without any viſible Marks of Di-

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vine Vengeance, at leaſt, ſuch as we may Read from others. It's true, God may Reward, or Puniſh by ſecret ſteps or motions, and by a train of Cauſes and Events; but yet theſe are Methods not ſo agreeable to the Deſigns of infinite Wiſdom, in Rewarding, or Puniſhing in this World, for when they are diſpenſed at a diſtance, and after an inviſible manner, they cannot influence the Offender, or the Publick, becauſe, by this means, they cannot well be reſolved into the direct, and immediate cauſes of them; and conſequently, the great deſign of ſuch Diſpenſations is in a great meaſure loſt, or ſtifled. But now, ſince it is concluded, that the Violation of Laws does not only infer a Right of Puniſhment, but that Puniſhment will infallibly follow upon the Violation of Laws; we may from hence further conclude, that there's another World aſſigned by God for a final, and ſtrict Diſtribution of Rewards, and Puniſhments. And certainly, ſince God is a God of Juſtice, and has decreed Puniſhments, as well as Rewards; we muſt conclude, that his laſt Diſtributions will be Acted upon the niceſt Rules of Juſtice, and conſequently proportion-

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ed according to the true Intrinsick Nature of every Action, without Prejudice, or Partiality, or the least Respect of Persons. These are truths that follow in direct, and easie consequences, from the nature of the things themselves. But then if we allow the Divine Oeconomy of Conscience, it's impossible we can reject the evidence of them: That God should Establish a Register of our Actions in the very Frame of our Natures, is an uncontroulable Argument, that he has Created us to some solemn Tribunal. Nay further, that God should not only Create us with retentive Powers and Faculties, whereby we keep a kind of Diary of past Actions, but implant certain absolving, and condemning Powers upon them, whereby we are necessarily possessed with Apprehensions of Guilt, and Punishment, or Favour or Reward. It's a clear Indication there will be a Tribunal erected, where these Divine Powers will display, and exert themselves to the utmost pitch of Activity. The *Latitudinarian*, may (if he pleases,) bring Disgrace upon them, by resolving them into Superstitious Fears, and the Bias of Education; but I'm perswaded, it is unexceptionably

erably proved there's the Finger of God in 'em. And therefore, we muſt conclude, that the Powers of Natural Conſcience are only a kind of Vicegerent, or Subſtitute, that acts for a time by way of Reſtraint on the one hand, and Encouragement on the other, but at laſt, ſhe muſt give up all her Reports, and reſign to a Supreme Judicature, ſhe muſt as it were, *deliver up the Kingdom unto God*, and appear as a Witneſs, rather than a Judge. Theſe are the Natural Conſequences, and Original Deſigns, and Uſes of ſuch Divine Powers, for unleſs theſe be admitted, it's impoſſible we ſhould account for them, as the Ordinances of an infinitely Wiſe Creator. But further, that which moſt powerfully demonſtrates a State of Future Rewards and Puniſhments, is the Efforts of Conſcience towards the laſt Periods of Life. That the Powers of Conſcience ſhould awake, and grow Strong and Vigorous, when the Animal Powers grow Faint and Languid, that her Apprehenſions ſhould be clear, and Piercing, her Reſentments Rigid and Severe, and her Exultations full of Joy, and Conſolation, when the powers of Animal Nature are ſunk and waſted,

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and ready to Expire, is an Infallible Demonstration that we are Acted by a Principle highly distinct from Matter, from Flesh, and Blood, or Animal Spirits, or in a word, a Principle that will Live and Act after this Earthy Tabernacle is dissolved. Indeed, when we consider that the Reflections of a well spent Life discover themselves at the point of Death, when the Passions of the Animal Part are sunk, and wasted, in the most grateful Applauses, and substantial Satisfactions; so that the whole World, and all its Charms and Beauties, appear flat and empty before it, what can a reasoning Mind conclude but that 'tis a Harbinger to some future Rewards. It implies a deep presension of some future Blessings that shall be conferred upon us by a Sovereign Power, as a *Recompence of that Labour of Love we have entertained for his Name's sake.* On the other hand, when we consider those insupportable Gripes and Convulsions, more bitter than the Pangs of Death, that are the fatal conclusion of a dissolute, impenitent Life; when we consider that the Tempest arises and grows loud and clamorous, in proportion to the decays of Nature, and tho'

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that cracks and groans and ſinks, yet this will not be appeaſed; we muſt conclude that there are convictions that, will be carried into another State, and not only torment, but impeach every impenitent Criminal, before ſome other Tribunal. Indeed, were there no certainty of Rewards and Puniſhments, annexed to the violation or obſervance of Laws, or were there an exact diſtribution made in this World, or in a Word, were there no real diſcovery of a divine Oeconomy of Conſcience, then we muſt think of ſome other Method to diſpel the Vapour. But ſince theſe are proved upon the higheſt evidences and Demonſtrations, we muſt conclude that ſuch black preſages are the prologue to future Miſeries, to certain Allotments, that will be the Award of ſome future Reckoning. Theſe are Evidences ſo clear and undenyable, that if the *Latitudinarian* will ſtill perſiſt, I'm confident his only conviction will be an actual perception of the Fruits of his diſſolute Life, and his Impregnable Infidelity.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXII.

How far Conscience shall be a Measure of the Divine Justice, in the distribution of future Punishments.

NOw since it's abundantly demonstrated that there's a divine Oeconomy of Conscience, and that it rests on the unalterable measures of moral Goodness, or the original nature of things themselves, we may with force of reason conclude, that our past Actions shall be chiefly tried by this Original Standard. It may indeed be objected, That no other Conscience can be the measure of any Man's Condemnation but his own, nor upon any Actions than those he was conscious of when committed. The first part of the Objection is certainly an uncontroverted truth, for when God puts any man on his Tryal upon the Evidence of Conscience, it must certainly be his own, and not another's Conscience, but yet it's highly probable our Consciences will not be such as they were when enslaved by vitious Habits and Dispositions, but reformed according to the divine Oeconomy of Conscience, and consequently the Original

Standard of Conſcience will become our own, and appear as Evidence againſt us. It's highly evident from what has already been ſuggeſted, that the Conſciences of Men in another World will be fixed on a new bottom. It's highly probable that all the Minutes of every Action, together with the Natures and Reaſons of the Line of Duty, will be diſplayed and preſented to the view of the mind; ſo that there will not be only a new diſcovery of loſt Idea's, Thoughts and Actions, but of their incompatibility with the Line of Duty; nay, there will be a diſcovery of the Reaſons and Original of all Miſcarriages; the Mind will plainly diſcern the Error and Abſurdity of former Convictions; ſhe will confeſs that the violence and importunity of Luſt, or a habit of Thoughtleſneſs, or Inconſideration, was the true and genuine cauſe of 'em, and conſequently the frame and Oeconomy of Conſcience will not only be altered, according to the Intrinſick Nature of things, and received as every Man's own proper Conſcience, but it will diſcover Sin and Guilt in the erring Conſcience, and charge the miſchief of it upon its proper owner, where-ever the Errors appear to be contracted from

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the neglect of means of Information. For certainly as God has endued us with Faculties to instruct us in the Line of Duty, so he has made us capable of attaining it in that Course and Order which he has established, and consequently of pursuing and embracing such Means as are truly conducive to the attainment of it; and therefore when proper Means are instituted or proposed, or, as it were, lie before us in the common road of Thinking, the Mischiefs, or iniquity of an Action, by the Laws of Conscience, will be imputed to us, tho' it was committed with a perswasion of its Innocence, because the Order of Nature, and the Laws of Humane Action are as much perverted by acting without the use of established means, as contrary to inward Convictions; and tho' the Action in the precise nature of it is not willfully wicked, yet the neglect of Means may be justly esteemed willfull, and consequently the Effects and mischiefs of the Action justly imputed. I will not deny but there are thousands of miserable Wretches in the World under such fatal Circumstances, that they seem to be placed out of the reach of due Means of Information; but

to judge precisely of this seems to be a peculiar of the Searcher of Hearts and Reins. However I am perswaded the common Exigences and Necessities of Humane Nature will instruct Mankind in the most fundamental Rules of Natural Religion; and yet God will charge nothing upon us, but where he can convince our Conscience of notorious Neglects; and in this case it's consonant to the Rules of Justice, that Sentence should be passed not according to former, but present Convictions. Indeed it can never be imagin'd, that the great Judge of all the Earth in his final Awards to Mankind, will erect a Tribunal that had not its Original from him, I mean from the Convictions of an erroneous Conscience; and therefore since it is demonstrated that new Sentiments, and Convictions, will break in upon the Mind, even to the charging of Guilt upon those Neglects which were the immediate source of false Convictions, we may justly conclude that the judicial Proceedings of the Great Day shall be established upon a regulated Conscience; I mean, according to the Divine Oeconomy of it; and consequently it is not the Plea of former Convictions, nor

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want of conſciouſneſs when Enormities were committed, that will be ſufficient to exempt any Man from the juriſdiction of it. For theſe may be reſolved into Perſonal Neglects, and Perſonal Neglects are alone ſufficient to derive a Guilt upon us. As for the want of conſciouſneſs it's a branch of the Objection not yet replied to; and therefore I ſhall make ſome few Remarks upon it. And firſt, it's certain as long as Enormities are committed upon perſonal Neglects, as in the caſe of Drunkenneſs, it is not neceſſary the Mind ſhould be conſcious of the whole proceſs, when actually committed. It's abundantly ſufficient, if upon a repreſentation of Circumſtances we ſhall at laſt be forced to own them, or aſcribe the Commiſſion of 'em to our ſelves, for this will bring us under the dominion of Conſcience at the laſt day. Certainly we may with as much force of Reaſon plead an Exemption from the guilt of Enormities, which thro' tract of time were wiped off the Table of the Mind, as deny to account for Enormities, which when committed we were not conſcious of, when it was ſome former Enormity had diſabled us from being conſcious of 'em;

whereas it can only be required in both caſes that proper, and competent Methods are contrived to make us conſcious at the laſt day, ſo as to pronounce our ſelves the Authors of 'em; for when this is done, Conſcience will determine as effectually as if our preſent and paſt Convictions were conſonant to each other. Upon the whole then it's viſible, it is not the preſent ſtate of any Man's Conſcience, any farther than it accords with the Divine Oeconomy of Conſcience, no more than any preſent Act of Conſciouſneſs, that will be received for a final meaſure of the Goodneſs or Evil of our Actions; and conſequently of a final Condemnation or Deliverance, but Conſcience founded on the expreſs Laws of God, the ſole Rule of Duty, and the Agreement or Diſagreement of our Actions with them. I would not be miſtaken, as if I intended to ſtreighten, or fix Limits to the infinite Mercies of God; there's nothing but his own infinite Purity, Truth, or Juſtice, can at any time divert his Mercies; but yet I think it's evident that we ſhall be judged for our Actions, as they are in their own Nature, and that too on the Awards of a rectified Conſcience, where-

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ever an erroneous Conscience can be charged with Guilt. No one can dispute the Guilt of an Erroneous Conscience, where the Error is propagated thro' willfull Enormities, or manifest Neglects. Thus far the sacred Canon is express and clear, when we are told in the case of Error, that the Mind and Conscience is defiled, *Tit.* 1. 15. And certainly where-ever there is Defilement, there must be Guilt, and where-ever there is Guilt there is at least Punishment due. And I presume it's sufficiently demonstrated that lost Ideas will be revived, that every Action will appear in its proper Dress, and consequently the whole Oeconomy of Conscience will be changed. If what has already been offered be not conclusive, the State of the Wicked after Condemnation will infer it. Now certainly whoever allows the divine Oeconomy of Conscience must allow a future Judgment, and if there's a future Judgment, and Men to be judged by their Consciences, the most Hardened, Unrelenting Sinner, will be brought to a clear apprehension of the Line of Duty, and by this means forced to own the Justice of his Sentence; tho' his Conscience

was ſeered and paſt feeling, it ſhall now recover a double Force, and retain the quickeſt apprehenſion of Things; and Conſcience thus enforced, and armed with freſh Power and Vigour, ſhall be the eternal Inſtrument of increaſing the Torments of the damned. Since then Conſcience ſhall be thus regulated in Order to enhance, and perpetuate their Miſery, we may juſtly conclude that it's Regulation will commence at the great Tribunal, in Order to ratify the ſentence of Condemnation; and certainly ſince it muſt be allowed that Conſcience will be an Inſtrument of future Condemnation, as well as Miſery; we muſt conclude that it will be one and the ſame Conſcience, acted by the ſame Meaſures and Principles, and of the ſame Extent and Latitude, and conſequently a Conſcience cleared from all Error and Miſtake, Partiality or Connivance; and in a Word, a Conſcience eſtabliſhed according to the Divine Oeconomy of it, the Law of God, and the eternal Meaſures of Moral Goodneſs and Duty. This is that *Candle of the Lord*, as the Wiſeman expreſſes it, that will diſplay its Light into the deepeſt receſſes of the Heart, and *Search into the inward parts*

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of the Belly, Prov. 20. 27. In a Word it will be the inward Voice or Word of God, *quick and powerful and Sharper than any two Edged Sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of Soul and Spirit, and of the Joynts and Marrow, and is a discerner of the Thoughts, and intents of the Heart.* Heb. 4. 12.

§. 2. From what hath been said it may not be improper to make some further Remarks upon Mr. *Lock*'s Notions of Conscience. It's observable Mr. *Lock* makes Conciousness and Conscience the same, and Conscience to consist in nothing else, but our own Opinions, of our own Actions; and pursuant to this, he affirms that in personal Identity which he makes to consist in Conciousness, is founded all the Right and Justice of Favour, Rewards and Punishment. *Book* 2. c. 27. §. 18.

But certainly the Conscience that will prevail in the great day, will not be any Opinions we have entertained of Actions when Committed tho' taken up at large: No, we shall then be acted by no other Opinions, but those of a regulated Conscience, and they shall sit as Judges, even over former Opinions, that were engendered by Neglect or Carelessness, and nothing but invincible

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Ignorance, or ſincere Repentance, can deliver us from its Dominion. This is indiſputably evident from the Regulations of Conſcience that ſhall be made according to the divine Oeconomy of it, whereby our Opinions of paſt Actions ſhall not be meaſured by former Convictions, but by the conformity of our Actions to the true Line of Duty, or means of Information. Again, that conſciouſneſs which ſome Men might be under when Enormities were committed, cannot be the foundation of future Puniſhment, but that Conſciouſneſs of paſt Actions which will ariſe from a regulated Conſcienee. For it is concluded that we may become conſcious of Enormities committed, of which we were not conſcious, when committed, and conſcious of others by wrong Meaſures and Convictions; but it will be that Conſciouſneſs, and thoſe Convictions we are under at the Great Tribunal, and reſult from a regulated Conſcience, that will be the meaſure of a final Abſolution or Condemnation. And certainly if Mr. *Lock* will not ſuffer his Notions to be guarded by theſe limitations, he muſt pardon me if I cannot comply with 'em, or cannot but eſteem 'em dangerous and falſe. On this ac-

count I cannot ſuffer an Inſtance, that ſeems to interfere with what is aſſerted, paſs off without a few Remarks. Mr. *Lock* in order to the eſtabliſhing his Notion of *Perſonal Identity*, brings in Enormities committed in Dunkenneſs of which a Man is not conſcious, and places them upon a level with thoſe committed by a Man in his ſleep, making him no more anſwerable for the one than the other. He indeed makes the Drunkard in this caſe obnoxious to the Civil Laws, for no other reaſon, but [*Becauſe in theſe caſes they cannot diſtinguiſh what is Real from what is Counterfeit, and ſo the Ignorance in Drunkenneſs or Sleep, is not admitted as a Plea.*] *But in the great Day wherein the Secrets of all Hearts ſhall be laid open, it may be reaſonable to think, no one ſhall be made to Anſwer for what he knows nothing of, but ſhall receive his Doom, his own Conſcience accuſing or excuſing him.* See *Sect.* 22. *Book* 2. *Chap.* 27. Here are a great many Paſſages that look with a very evil Aſpect, and therefore I ſhall ſay ſomething to each in their order. And firſt, I think this Author has drawn a very unjuſt Parallel between Crimes committed in Sleep and Dunkenneſs. It's well known that Sleep is a thing entailed on us as a Law, even

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a Law eſtabliſhed in the frame of our Beings, and commences upon the neceſſities of corruptible Nature, and therefore if Miſchief accidently follows, it cannot well be imputed, becauſe it is founded in a Cauſe or Principle that is inſeparable from Humane Nature, or rather is an Appendage of the moſt neceſſary Powers of it, that ſet us on a level with Brutes, and conſequently the Actions that flow from it cannot be imputed. But I hope this Author cannot plead a neceſſity of Nature for Drunkenneſs. A quantity of generous Liquor may ſometimes be required for the actuating the Spirits, but never to intoxicate, unman, or drown the Reaſon. In a word, Drunkenneſs argues a willful neglect in humane Conduct, and as ſuch is an Act of a free Agent, and conſequently the Actions that flow from it, tho' deſtitute of Choice or Deliberation are juſtly imputed. For in order to the imputing or charging an Action upon us, it is not neceſſary that it ſhould proceed from the free exerciſe of Reaſon, or previous Deliberation at the very Moment when Committed. It is ſufficient that it's owing to a Cauſe that is to be eſteemed truly Deliberate and Wilful. If this were not ſo, it's impoſ-

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sible any Sin of Ignorance can be Culpable; a Position so wide from the line of Christian Duty, that every Heathen Moralist will teach this Author the Absurdity of it. I shall for once Refer him to *Aristotle*, because he has culled out the case of Drunkenness to confirm the Doctrine. He assures us, Ignorance is Punishable whenever the cause of it can be charged upon us, and for this Reason, pronounces Crimes committed in Drunkenness, liable to double Punishment. Καὶ γὰρ ἐπ' αὐτῷ τῷ ἀγνοεῖν κολάζουσιν, ἐὰν αἴκος εἶναι δοκῇ τῆς ἀγνοίας, οἷον τοῖς μεθύοισι διπλᾶ τὰ ἐπίκμια· ἡ γὰρ ἀρχὴ ἐν αὐτῷ, κύριος γὰρ τοῦ μὴ μεθυσθῆναι, τοῦτο δ' αἴκον τῆς ἀγνοίας, καὶ τοὺς ἀγνοοῦντας τὶ τῶν ἐν τοῖς νόμοις, ἃ δεῖ ἐπίστασθαι, καὶ μὴ χαλεπά ἐστι κολάζουσιν. *Ethic. ad Nichom. Lib. 3. Chap, 7.*

But to proceed. As for the practice of Civil Governments in punishing Crimes committed when Disguised by Drink, he has shamefully Misrepresented it, when he Suggests that the only Reason, is, because they cannot distinguish what is Real from what is Counterfeit; and so the Ignorance in Drunkenness, or Sleep is not admitted as a Plea. It's a known truth, that Civil Judicatures take cognizance of nothing, but the outward Act, and when this appears,

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they constantly ascribe the internal Principles of the Action, Knowledge and Freedom, where the Criminal is under no Natural Disabilities, so that the Reasons that induce them to proceed to Censure in cases of this Nature, can be no other, but those which this excellent Moralist has assigned; for every such Criminal has ἀρχὴ ἐν αὐτῷ, and is κύριος δ ὢν μὴ μεθυσθῆναι. Tho' he was not Master of himself, when the Fact was committed, yet he is Acted by a Principle that made him Master of the cause of it; and consequently the Government may exercise a Right of Punishment. Again, every Government pronounces the ignorance of Laws sufficiently Promulged, as well as ignorance of the Action in respect of the Relation it bears to the Law, an affected ignorance, and consequently, such as not only renders the Action criminal, but such as in the Eye of every Government is criminal in its own Nature; and this is the second Reason assigned for double Punishment, Καὶ τὸν ἀγνοοῦντα τι τῶν ἐν τοῖς νόμοις, ἃ δεῖ ποιεῖν, καὶ μὴ χαλεπὰ ἐστι, κολάζουσι. In a word, it's visible where there is, Ἀρχὴ ἐν αὐτῷ, there the Action may be imputed, and consequently Criminal; and for this Reason, Governments constantly pronounce

nounce it ſo; but then when this is wanting, as in the caſe of down-right Madneſs, where the Mind reſts under a Phyſical Diſability, if Crimes or Miſchiefs, are committed upon it, the Government only enquires into the Symptoms of Madneſs, and upon Evidence, Acquits the reputed Criminal; and in theſe caſes I queſtion not, but the great Judge of all the World will do the like. But now, I think 'tis perfect Demonſtration, the true Reaſon why Humane Laws puniſh in the caſe before us, is not becauſe they cannot diſtinguiſh certainly what is Real, what Counterfeit. *Thirdly*, As for the proceedings of the great Day, I preſume, they may Lawfully move upon thoſe Meaſures, and Principles, that Humane Tribunals have recourſe to, as their undoubted prerogative, and tho Enormities committed thro Madneſs, or Sleep, may not be ſtrictly accounted for; yet I'm perſwaded, no Ignorance founded in Drunkenneſs, will ever be admitted a plea of Innocence, as is apparently Suggeſted by this Author. It's abundantly concluded, that Conſcience will be Regulated according to the Divine Oeconomy of it; and that it will aſcribe to its ſelf, and yield an Aſſent to a great many Actions, which the preſent State of ſome Mens Conſciences *either know nothing of*, or at leaſt have cauſed them to be pronounced Innocent. And certainly, where the Conſcience can be convinc'd that ſuch a particular Enormity is to be reſolv'd into willfull neglects, as in the caſe of Drunkenneſs, it will aſcribe the action,

Action, and charge a Guilt upon us, and by this means a Man may be haraſſed with an Accuſing Conſcience at the Great Day, when the Secrets of all Hearts ſhall be laid open, for things he at preſent knows little of.

The CLOSE.

I Have now performed what was at firſt deſigned, and I hope I have laid ſuch a Platform of Natural Religion, as is conſiſtent with the Doctrines of Revealed Religion, and the nature and reality of things; and I have been more particular, that I might obviate not only the Irreligious Notions, and Poſitions that obtain in the preſent Age, but obſtruct the growth of New Ones, by the Artificial, *but* Pernicious *inſinuations of the Author, I have ſo much Animadverted upon. I have Formed no Deſigns from the undertaking, but the advance of Truth, and the Maintenance of a Spirit of Religion, by Eſtabliſhing the Foundations of it; and if the performance does in ſome meaſure come up to it, and appears to be drawn according to the main Lines of Truth, I ſhall be ready to Vindicate it againſt the applauded Cavils of thoſe, that I'm afraid are devoted to tear up the whole of Religion, both Root and Branch. But if among a great many Truths, I have made ſome falſe* Steps, *ſome few* Errata *that are any wiſe inconſiſtent with Truth, or Injurious to any part of Religion, or Piety, it is without* Deſign, *and upon the firſt* Conviction, *I ſhall make* Satisfaction *to God, and the World, by a free and ample* Retractation.

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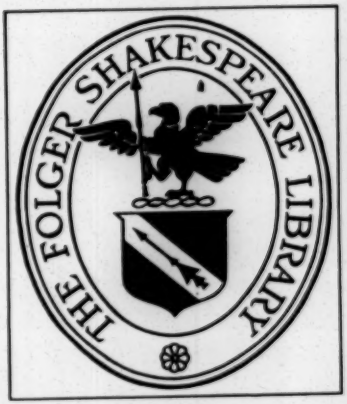
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